

**Rehearsing Settler Colonialism:
Music, Visuals, and Text
in the Spectacle of Canadian National Identity at Vancouver 2010**

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Abstract

In this dissertation, I argue that settler colonial practices of “elimination” (A. Simpson 2014) and “extraction” (L. Simpson 2013) are present throughout the artistic choices in the “cultural portion” of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony. Within expressions of white settler Canadian nationalism, elimination is seen in the representation of the landscape as vast and empty, and extraction is evident through a settler positionality on the land and a multiculturalism that treats diversity as a resource to be mined (Lowman and Barker 2015, Robinson 2020). In response to the work of Dylan Robinson (2020), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2021) and others, I undertake this study as part of settler responsibility within the co-intentional (Huygens 2011) work of anti-colonialism between settlers and Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island and further afield.

While national spectacles such as the Olympics tend to distract observers from the reality of social injustices (MacAloon 1984), using a multimodal discourse analysis (Machin 2010, Goodwin 1992), I closely examine each multimodal element (music, visuals, and text) to discuss how the scenes reveal an underlying settler colonial mindset (Wolfe 2006, Veracini 2010). By combining the anti-colonial perspectives of Coulthard, Robinson, and Mignolo with the multimodal analysis, I propose an analytic framework which aims to reveal whether spectacles actively engage decolonial content, or whether they leave settler colonial terms unchanged (Coulthard 2011, Mignolo 2020).

Studies such as this one, which serve to unveil the underlying logic of settler colonialism and its operation within constructions of Canadian national identity, are a continuing step towards a decolonized future. I offer this work as my small contribution to helping settler Canadians recognize and relinquish their settler positionality in favor of listening and living as guests and neighbors on Indigenous territory.

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Introductory Chapter

Introduction

In responding to the supposed changing relationship between settler governments and Indigenous peoples brought about by “post-colonialism,” in 1999 Taiaiake Alfred wrote: “the rusty cage may be broken, but a new chain has been strung around the indigenous neck; it offers more room to move, but it still ties our people to white men pulling on the strong end.”¹

Although Alfred’s words are 25 years old, and may seem less than relevant in the post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission era, Dene scholar Glen Coulthard’s reference to Alfred’s words pits them as equally relevant for discussions of the politics of recognition as for reconciliatory efforts.² The unsettling, visceral image that Alfred paints here is remarkably reminiscent of the illustrations of enslaved people being brought to Turtle Island during the years of the slave trade. In painting this picture, Alfred reminds his audience that colonialism, like its neighbor, white supremacy, captures, enslaves, and ultimately destroys the lives it views as unworthy. As I read his words, I think to myself:

How can anyone read Indigenous authors, or listen to their Indigenous neighbors and think that Canada is doing ok, that Canada is a peaceful, apologetic, kind nation where everyone is treated with equal respect, and has access to equal rights? Or, if we can, then perhaps what we are doing is not really listening at all. Maybe we have tin ears, like that judge, and can’t pick up the meaning and nuance of Indigenous peoples and their creativity and activism and resurgence and refusals.³ Or maybe, as Dylan Robinson describes it, we really do have ears that are hungry, ears which are so selfishly oriented that we only really hear what is of personal value to us, and we ignore (or worse, destroy) all that remains.

¹ Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (Don Mills, Ont: Oxford University Press, 1999), xiii.

² Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Indigenous Americas (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 156.

³ Reference to statement by judge in a legal case who refused to listen to Gitksan hereditary chief Mary Johnson’s *limx oo’y* (dirge song), because he had a so called “tin ear.” See Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 37-47.

Perhaps it is best not to begin a dissertation with such a seemingly vitriolic statement, but I say it as much to myself as I say it to my, perhaps imagined, future audience. Really, I say it to settlers, not as a category of people, but as a positionality—those who, perhaps from ignorance as much as from intention, choose not to hear. This dissertation then, represents my attempt to listen, and not just to listen, but to hear what my Indigenous neighbors, activists, and fellow scholars have said about the condition of Canada. It is my humble attempt, having heard, to put into practice what we, as settlers, have been called upon to do—critique, engage, surrender, relinquish, and educate ourselves on the ways that Canadian society (structured by a settler colonial frame of reference) continues to displace and damage Indigenous life, and do something about it.

Research Inspirations

At its heart, my work is a response to the call that Dylan Robinson has given to scholars of Canadian music who are interested in processes of redress:

this work involves examining how Canadian music history’s centralization of multicultural and landscape-based tropes of Canadian musical exceptionalism are not benign choices for surveying characteristic national traits but instead have political implications through their dis-location of Indigenous presence, sovereignty, and histories of land stewardship.⁴

While Robinson’s instruction is addressed to those who are writing about music history and art music in Canada, I apply this call to the site of national spectacles in order to investigate the role that music plays in rehearsing a national identity. I follow Robinson’s directive in questioning how Canada mobilizes the rhetoric of multiculturalism and “landscape-based tropes” for the purpose of creating a narrative of national identity in such a way that contributes to the erasure of Indigenous identity.

⁴ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 12.

Similarly, I align my work with Mary Ingraham's assertion that Canadian operas act as "barometers" of nationhood, for how they perform Canadian history and re-enact stereotypes of Indigenous peoples.⁵ Applying the same concept to Canadian Olympic spectacle in place of operatic spectacle, I notice that Olympic (and other internationally oriented) opening ceremonies may provide an evaluative scale by which we may read the evolution of Canadian national identity. In making this comparison to operas, I notice that opening ceremonies for internationally significant sporting events embrace a very similar set of characteristics as do national operas. Benjamin Curtis lists a reliance on folk elements, incorporation of the national language, themes from history/legend, and references to landscape as qualities of national operas.⁶ Just like these operas, internationally significant cultural performative sites or events function as a theatre where "diversity is produced"⁷ and national identity is rehearsed, lending status to particular kinds of narrative⁸ that reinforce cultural regimes.⁹

Based on the tropes Robinson identifies, and the role of musico-theatrical events in rehearsing and reinforcing particular kinds of narratives, my research posed the following questions: What sort of community is being rehearsed through the music that is selected and composed for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics?¹⁰ How does that music serve to strengthen or undermine the narratives of settler colonialism that are prevalent in Canadian society? How do

⁵ Mary Ingraham, "Assimilation, Integration and Individuation: The Evolution of First Nations Musical Citizenship in Canadian Opera," in *Opera Indigene Re/presenting First Nations and Indigenous Cultures*, edited by Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 212.

⁶ Benjamin W. Curtis, *Music Makes the Nation: Nationalist Composers and Nation Building in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Amherst, N.Y: Cambria Press, 2008), 46.

⁷ Stuart Hall, "Which Public, Whose Service?," *All Our Futures: The Changing Role and Purpose of the BBC*, edited by Wilf Stevenson, (Bloomsbury Academic, 1993), 36.

⁸ Paula Danckert, "Louis Riel: History, Theatre, and a National Narrative – An Evolving . . . Story," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (2018): 40.

⁹ Lawrence Kramer, "Musical Narratology: A Theoretical Outline," *Indiana Theory Review*, 12 (1991), 141–62; repr. in *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley, 1995), 148.

¹⁰ "Complete Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony – Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics" [Olympicvancouver2010](https://youtu.be/MxZpUueDAvc), April 11, 2010, accessed June 7 2024, <https://youtu.be/MxZpUueDAvc>.

the values and characteristics of settler colonialism as presented in the Opening Ceremony at Vancouver 2010 rehearse a Canadian national identity that is built on the erasure of Indigenous peoples and the extraction of land and other resources? Following Robinson directly, how does an emphasis on landscape-based tropes, and tropes of multiculturalism further serve the settler-colonial national identity?

Drawing from the brief points discussed above, and as I will explain more thoroughly throughout this introductory chapter, my work in this dissertation argues that settler colonial practices of “elimination” and “extraction” are present throughout the artistic choices in the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony.¹¹ More specifically, within expressions of white settler Canadian nationalism, elimination is seen through representing the landscape as vast and empty, and extraction is evident through the settler positionality on the land and through how multiculturalism treats diversity as a resource to be mined.¹² Before continuing to the main body of this work, I begin with a statement of positionality, acknowledging my relationship to the land, to my neighbors, and the biases and positions which inform my work.

Positionality

In the process of writing this dissertation, I have continually been negotiating the questions of what it means for me to reject the settler colonizer positionality, embrace being a guest and ally and work out in practice what is required of me as a settler working alongside and in solidarity with my Indigenous neighbors in pursuit of decolonization. There is no one cohesive

¹¹ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Duke University Press: London, 2014), 12; Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, and Naomi Klein, “Dancing the World into Being: A Conversation with Idle No More’s Leanne Simpson,” *YES! Magazine* (blog), March 5, 2013, accessed July 20, 2022, <https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2013/03/06/dancing-the-world-into-being-a-conversation-with-idle-no-more-leanne-simpson>.

¹² Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada* (Black Point, Nova Scotia; Fernwood Publishing, 2015), 31; Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 49.

answer to those questions. But I write and work with those thoughts in mind, revising my trajectory and building new connections as I learn. Before beginning the work proper, it is important to make a clear statement of my positionality, the personal background from which I approach this work and the biases I carry. Stating my positionality makes note of what principles and how my location influences my perception.¹³ As Katie Boudreau Morris suggests, settlers can move towards decolonizing solidarity by being self-reflexive and by asking these three questions: “who am I? What are my relationships with my communities? What are my relationships with the land I live on?”¹⁴ In this section I can at least begin to answer these questions, but these are far from concrete as I seek to develop new relationships to my communities and to the land I live, work, and study on.

I was born in Calgary, Alberta, on Treaty 7 Territory, the traditional lands of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations, the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda. My parents were born in Canada and New Zealand, but my grandparents were from England and Germany. My family moved to Taranaki (a province of Aotearoa, New Zealand) when I was 6 years old. Growing up in New Zealand, I was always proud to say I was “Canadian,” born in a big, beautiful, far-off country, that, to my Kiwi friends, was foreign and exciting. And, although I was proud of it, I never asked what it meant to “be” Canadian. When my family returned to Canada in my college years (after 14 formative years in New Zealand), I found my new friends here to be critical of how little I knew of “Canadian” culture. I didn’t care about hockey, I didn’t know who The Tragically Hip were, and I’d never seen an episode Zoboombafoo. As I began my undergraduate studies, I learned that there were more things than just Tim Horton’s and maple

¹³ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 10.

¹⁴ Katie Boudreau Morris, “Decolonizing solidarity: cultivating relationships of discomfort,” in *Pathways of Settler Decolonization*, ed. Lynne Davis, Jeff Denis, and Raven Sinclair, (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2019), 464.

syrup that defined Canadian identity. I realized that Canada was known for concepts like bilingualism, multiculturalism, and yet underneath those seemingly peaceful words, there was also a tense and changing relationship with Indigenous peoples. It wasn't until graduate school that I really started to investigate and understand the settler colonial processes of assimilation and erasure that were (and are, as I have come to learn) so big a part of Canada's formation. It wasn't until grad school that I learned that unceded territory exists, and what that means, and that there are some crucial implications that it has for how we, as settlers, should live on this land and in relationship to our Indigenous neighbors.

Having grown up in both Canada and New Zealand, I have noticed some similarities and differences in how the two countries operate in their relationship with the Indigenous peoples of those lands. Like New Zealand, Canada is ethnically diverse, and celebrates that fact, despite varying levels of tension with Indigenous peoples. In both countries that I have called home, Indigenous culture and a pride in multiculturalism have been important aspects of shaping the country's image. From what I recollect, while I was growing up there, New Zealand seemed to be more "advanced" in its relationship with the Indigenous Māori people than Canada was at the same time. As a student in Grade 5 in the early 2000s, I was learning to count in Te Reo Māori (the local indigenous language), and The Māori Party (a political party) was becoming increasingly active in Parliament. Although New Zealand also had and continues to have a contentious relationship with the Māori people, it felt like conversations about the importance of honoring Indigenous culture and rights were more at the forefront of everyday life than they were in Canada at the same time.

In addition to identifying myself as a settler as I begin this journey, I also want to acknowledge that I do this work as a follower of Jesus. To do so requires nuance, humility, and a

willingness to come to terms with some of the evils that have been done in the name of Christ. I know that people who claimed to follow Jesus and belong to His church were complicit, and often, directly at fault in the assimilative practices of settler colonialism and particularly the residential school system. However, I also affirm that bad theology, and a worse enacting of that theology resulted in practices that Jesus would never have stood for. As a Christian, I do not hold these contradictions lightly. In fact, they are a source of grief, humility, and repentance as I continue this work and as I seek to walk in the ways of Jesus. They have also been a source of inspiration for my continued perseverance in the research and writing process, because the narratives of erasure and assimilation that define settler colonialism don't line up with the vision of God's kingdom I have learned about in reading the Bible, especially in Revelation, where God's kingdom is described as a place where people from every nation, tribe, people and language are welcome to gather in peace and worship around His throne.¹⁵

While this dissertation began from my own personal questions about what it means to be "Canadian," as I have developed in this project, I have somewhat rejected that nebulous identity and instead ask what it means to be a settler colonizer, and further, what it means to reject that position and live well in a land whose national narratives are fraught with pain, and honor our Indigenous hosts.

The Object of Inquiry and Study Parameters

As a whole, this dissertation is addressed to settlers. I acknowledge that it is not my job to provide solutions to colonialism, nor claim to be an authoritative voice on what the process of anti-colonialism should entail beyond the specific context in which I am working. Throughout this dissertation, I examine questions of how we think about Canada, and how we portray

¹⁵ Revelation 7:9 ESV. Beyond this statement addressing my positionality, I do not engage with Christianity in this dissertation, but instead focus on the critique of settler colonialism.

Canada to the world in ways that can harm our neighbors. I attempt to heed the call of Indigenous peoples and the variety of people of other ethnicities that share this land, who have said and are saying, “this is not working.” I do not claim to have all the answers, I simply offer this work as my own response to the challenges that Indigenous folks have raised to settlers to work towards dismantling the injustices of the settler colonial mindset. Specifically, as a music scholar, I follow the work of Ryan Shuvera and Dylan Robinson in the Canadian context who have promoted such questions as “how do we listen? And how have we been trained to hear?”¹⁶ Building from these scholars, and the works of many others, I ask, how do we evaluate the narratives that are being rehearsed in our spectacles of national identity? What underlying ideologies are revealed by the way we enact the story of Canada on the global stage? And how does music contribute to that story?

I offer my work in this dissertation most pertinently as a direct response to the work of Stó:lō musicologist Dylan Robinson. In his 2020 book, *Hungry Listening*, Robinson sets out one aspect of the task of redress for settlers. In calling music scholars in particular to disciplinary redress within the context of reconciliation, Robinson asserts that “this work involves examining how Canadian music history’s centralization of multicultural and landscape-based tropes of Canadian musical exceptionalism are not benign choices for surveying characteristic national traits, but instead have political implications through their dis-location of Indigenous presence, sovereignty, and histories of land stewardship.”¹⁷ My dissertation directly responds to that call as I investigate the multicultural, landscape-based, and other tropes of Canadian identity that are reinforced through the interaction of music, visuals, and texts associated with the Opening

¹⁶ Ryan Shuvera, “Sounding Unsettlement: Rethinking Settler States of Mind and Re(-)Cognition through Scenes of Cross-Cultural Listening,” (PhD Dissertation, London, Ontario, University of Western Ontario, 2020). Robinson, *Hungry Listening*.

¹⁷ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 12.

Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. I also seek to pay attention to what Robinson describes as the innate settler listening posture one of “hungry listening.” In opposing hungry listening—which is exploitative and consumptive, Robinson invites listeners to critically engage with their own listening and creative practices as part of a decolonial positionality. This work of anti-colonial redress forms the basis of the theoretical framework for this dissertation.

What is Settler Colonialism?

To understand the nature of colonialism in Canada as ongoing, and thus to further the critiques and anti-colonial posture that is required for this dissertation, it is important to understand the Canadian situation as one which is built around settler colonialism. Rather than using the term colonialism more broadly, I follow the work of other scholars who articulate settler colonialism as a related but distinct form, with its own particular narrative and set of implications. The trajectory of this narrative, and the implications of settler colonialism’s values and goals are essential pieces of the critique that will form the body of this dissertation. Cole Harris provides a succinct definition of settler colonialism as “that form of colonialism associated with immigrants who became the dominant population in the territories they occupied and, in so doing, displaced the Indigenous peoples who previously had lived there. The coming of settlers was variously buttressed by military force; commercial, and later, industrial capital; and the administrative apparatus of a state.”¹⁸ Harris’ basic definition identifies the overarching trajectory of settler colonialism: the displacement of Indigenous peoples by settlers who become the dominant population (in power, if not in number). Historian and political scholar Lorenzo Veracini identifies the differences between settler colonialism and colonialism proper (for lack of

¹⁸ Cole Harris, *A Bounded Land: Reflections on Settler Colonialism in Canada* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2020), 3.

a better term) by discussing the implications of their different “narratives.”¹⁹ Veracini explains that the narrative of colonialism is one which has an exit strategy—that, is that it usually involves envisioning a return to the country of origin, while in contrast, the narrative of settler colonialism does not, and thus the intention of settler colonialism is one of staying put and maintaining domination.²⁰ Veracini further writes, “a settler sensibility envisages a particular set of narrative refrains and a specific understanding of history where ‘progress’ is typically understood as a measure of indigenous displacement (i.e. transfer) and ultimate erasure.”²¹ As the next chapter will show, displacement and erasure of Indigenous peoples and their culture have been key components of settler Canadian history, and in the following analytic chapters, I will examine how evidence of erasure continues to shape expressions of cultural nationalism through the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games.

To achieve this ultimate erasure, settler colonialism has particular implications for land, bodies, and resources. As Eve Tuck and Julie Gorlewski explain, “Settler colonialism is different from other colonial formations which focus on extractions of labor and resources: Often in addition to these extractions, settler colonialism is ultimately about the pursuit of land for settlement. Settler colonialism requires the destruction of Indigenous communities to clear the way for settlement. Through genocide, assimilation, appropriation, and state violence, Indigenous presence is erased.”²² While the term erasure may seem to be one which softens the blow of colonial damage, Tuck and Gorlewski’s definition here makes clear that it is a violent and ongoing process that involves not only the genocide of Indigenous people, but also the

¹⁹ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 97-98.

²⁰ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 97-101.

²¹ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 101.

²² Eve Tuck and Julie Gorlewski, “Racist Ordering, Settler Colonialism, and edTPA: A Participatory Policy Analysis,” *Educational Policy* 30, no. 1 (January 1, 2016), 210.

appropriation of the identities and cultures. This echoes the assertion made by Patrick Wolfe that “settler colonialism is a structure not an event.”²³ This oft quoted aphorism from Wolfe, who is one of the founding scholars of settler colonial studies, reveals that settler colonialism is defined not as a singular occurrence but rather as an ongoing operation which has a particular set of goals.

While erasure is common to both colonialism and settler colonialism, settler colonialism also has an additional end goal. Settler colonialism takes erasure even further with the goal of replacing the Indigenous peoples so that the settlers become the “indigenous.” Johnston and Lawson explain, “the typical settler narrative, then, has a doubled goal. It is concerned to act out the suppression or effacement of the indigene; it is also concerned to perform the concomitant indigenization of the settler.”²⁴ This performance involves aspects of separating the settlers from their original imperial culture, and appropriating Indigenous identity in order to “naturalize its presence on the land.”²⁵ Litt continues, “Settler colonial theory rightly sees appropriation as part of a general strategy of erasure. The settlerium pilfers Indigenous identity markers to satisfy its yen for indigenization.”²⁶ In summary, settler colonialism is distinct from colonialism in that it seeks to overtake the indigenous population of a place, validate its own position on the land, and then supersede and become the “indigenous.” As the work of the scholars quoted in this section makes clear, settler colonialism is an ongoing process, which has Indigenous erasure as its primary goal. Erasure will thus be a key word in the analytic portion of this dissertation, as it is a

²³ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006), 99.

²⁴ Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), 369.

²⁵ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 4. For more on how this occurs in the United States see Philip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian*, Yale Historical Publications, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

²⁶ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 6.

marker of the ongoing process of settler colonialism and can be particularly potent in its application in artistic contexts, as my later analyses will illuminate.

In the next chapter, I will discuss more specifically the characteristics of settler colonial nationalism as they are evoked in the Canadian context. However, there are several overarching qualities of settler colonialism which are informative for this dissertation. In addition to erasure, Indigenous writers and other scholars identify possession/appropriation, extraction, and elimination as qualities which are characteristic of settler colonialism. Audra Simpson explains that what settler colonialism is “supposed to do” is “eliminate Indigenous people; take all their land; [and] absorb then into a white, property-owning body politic.”²⁷ She summarizes this as the “settler logics of elimination.”²⁸ I use elimination and erasure synonymously in the remainder of this dissertation.

Echoing the work of Tuck and Gorlewski above, in a conversation with Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, interviewer Naomi Klein framed extraction as a “mindset”—that is, that the settler colonial orientation (or positionality) is one in which extraction operates as a guiding principle. While initially, in the early days of settler colonial invasion in Canada this extraction applied to resources such as land, and other natural resources such as gold or other minerals, Simpson clarifies that the principles of extraction are now applied to much more. She states: “My land is seen as a resource. My relatives in the plant and animal worlds are seen as resources. My culture and knowledge is a resource. My body is a resource and my children are a resource because they are the potential to grow, maintain, and uphold the extraction-assimilation

²⁷ A Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 8.

²⁸ A Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 12.

system.”²⁹ Simpson continues and defines extraction in this way: “extraction is taking. Actually, extracting is stealing – it is taking without consent, without thought, care or even knowledge of the impacts that extraction has on the other living things in that environment.”³⁰

In the analytic portions of this dissertation to follow, I frequently reference these two primary qualities of settler colonialism, erasure and extraction. I observe the erasure of Indigenous presence, agency, and sovereignty, and the extraction or appropriation of Indigenous land, culture, and other resources as evidence of settler colonial activity. Occasionally, I make note of how the principles of erasure and extraction are applied beyond just the relationship of settlers and Indigenous peoples. That is, I see the settler mindset of extraction being mobilized in how settlers treat minoritized others as well—for instance, as I will discuss in Chapter Five of this dissertation, building from the work of Eva Mackey and others, I note that the powerful settler colonial majority tends to treat diversity as a resource for the buttressing of its own power and identity. I make these observations not to minimize or homogenize the experiences of Indigenous peoples and other minorities in Canada, but merely to demonstrate that the settler colonial mindset has implications beyond just a settler-Indigenous binary and that it is a tool which can be used in upholding whiteness.³¹ Having defined settler colonialism as an ongoing structure, and an underlying (and at times, overt) ideology which continues to operate within the

²⁹ Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, and Naomi Klein, “Dancing the World into Being: A Conversation with Idle No More’s Leanne Simpson,” *YES! Magazine* (blog), March 5, 2013, accessed July 20, 2022, <https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2013/03/06/dancing-the-world-into-being-a-conversation-with-idle-no-more-leanne-simpson>

³⁰ Simpson and Klein.

³¹ For more on this see Andrea Smith, “Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy,” in *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Daniel HoSang, Oneka LaBennett, and Laura Pulido (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). Although Smith has since been publicly called out for claiming Indigenous heritage and identity without foundation for it, the conclusions she provides for the relationship between settler colonialism and white supremacy are informative. Alternatively, Chelsea Vowel points to Tiffany Jeannette King’s PhD Dissertation for further details on how settler colonialism impacts Black people. Tiffany Jeannette King, “In the Clearing: Black Female Bodies, Space and Settler Colonialism” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2013). Chelsea Vowel, *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Issues in Canada* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: HighWater Press, 2016).

Canadian cultural imaginary, I now turn to a discussion of how this ideology impacts the different groups of people who live on and occupy Turtle Island, particularly the spaces now referred to as Canada. This section on identifying the settler colonial positionalality informs my later analyses as I observe the ways in which the actors in the Opening Ceremony enact or invite a settler relationship to the lands and cultures they observe and participate in. Such observations lead to an opportunity for an anti-colonial critique of the settler colonial positionalality, and recognition that it is one which Settler Canadians can choose to reject.

Based on the characteristics identified by these scholars, I understand settler colonialism as an ideology and a mode of being, wherein a group of people come to a space and seek to take ownership of it, by displacing (through erasure and appropriation) the original people of the land. It is an ideology, in that it can operate on a level which may not be immediately obvious, and it is a mode of being in that individuals can choose (consciously, or at times, subconsciously) to embody or reject the values it holds. Settler colonialism seeks to validate its own existence and the indigenization of its members through the appropriation and erasure of the land, culture, resources and ultimately, identity of the local Indigenous groups.

Who is a settler? What defines the settler positionalality?

The land which we now refer to as Canada is home to many groups of people. To understand the relationship between those peoples, in this dissertation, I use terms that are broad, but which summarise the range of relationships that people have with one another and with the land. I follow Chelsea Vowel who uses the term “Indigenous peoples” to refer to the diverse populations of “First Nations, Métis, and Inuit living in what is now called Canada.”³² Following her recommendation, I also avoid referring to Indigenous peoples with the adjective “Canadian,”

³² Vowel, *Indigenous Writes*, 10.

since that refers to a particular citizenship which many Indigenous people reject. As often as possible, I refer to Indigenous people and their groups by the names they have chosen to identify with or shared with me and others in public settings.

Secondly, I refer to non-Indigenous people by the term “settlers.” Unlike Indigenous peoples who can identify with “entire histories and creation stories of how they belong on certain lands,” settlers are those who have moved to Canada from elsewhere, or are descended from those who did.³³ Chelsea Vowel provides further clarification on this, using the term settler to refer specifically to “non-Indigenous peoples living in Canada who form the European descended majority.”³⁴ Vowel asserts that the descendants of enslaved people who were forcibly brought to this land should never be referred to as settlers, and thus uses terms such as “non-Indigenous,” “Black” and “non-Black people of color,” in order to distinguish between them.³⁵ Amy Fung observes that settler colonial studies have a tendency to reproduce whiteness or read whiteness and settler colonialism as synonymous and thus miss the nuance that is needed in anti-colonial arguments to address anti-blackness, and the complicity of non-white minoritized groups in benefitting from and contributing to colonialism.³⁶ Fung complicates this narrative of white settler nationalism by pointing out that the story of Turtle Island is much more complicated than the “European-Indigenous binary” that it is often reduced to.³⁷ She explains “racialized women and men were instrumental to the construction of our current settler society without really belonging as part of that settler society.”³⁸ Thus, while Vowel uses the term “settler” to refer only to European descended peoples, I use the term settlers to refer to all non-Indigenous

³³ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 18.

³⁴ Vowel, *Indigenous Writes*, 16.

³⁵ Vowel, *Indigenous Writes*, 17.

³⁶ Amy Fung, “Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 53, no. 2 (2021).

³⁷ Fung, “Is Settler Colonialism,” 127.

³⁸ Fung, “Is Settler Colonialism,” 117.

people on Turtle Island. This is because, as I discuss in the coming paragraphs, I make a further distinction between settlers as people who have come to this land, and settler colonizers as people who choose to benefit from the settler colonial position. That is, I use the term “settler colonizers” as distinct from “Settler Canadians” to refer to a positionality that is based on how we choose to act in relationship to the land and to our Indigenous hosts.

Following Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker, I affirm that Settler Canadian names an identity that refers to heritage—that is, we are Settler Canadians because of how we came to be on this land, while settler colonizer refers to a particular way of being on that land and in relationship to it. As Lowman and Barker affirm later in their work however, these two identities or positions are not always distinct. They explain, “Settler...is not biologically determined, culturally circumscribed, or structured by a single political or economic system. It is because we, as Settler people, choose *en masse* to act as settler colonizers, to invest in peacemaker myths and narratives of pioneering frontiersmen and *terra nullius*, to believe in the multicultural promise of the Canadian identity, that settler colonizer and Settler Canadian become synonymous.”³⁹ Thus, while Lowman and Barker warn that settler colonizer and Settler Canadian are often synonymous, in this dissertation, I attempt to distinguish between them by arguing that Settler Canadians can reject the settler colonizer positionality, and choose to engage differently.

Lowman and Barker assert that Settler and Indigenous identities are not mutually exclusive, nor exclusively defined in relation to one another. Indigenous and Settler are each “extremely heterogeneous and diverse group[s].”⁴⁰ Explaining this more thoroughly, they write “Settler people do not strictly identify with one codifiable set of cultural practices, political or

³⁹ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 109.

⁴⁰ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 17.

economic institutions, embodied expressions, or even particular languages or religions. Rather, Settler people come to identify through ways of doing things — particular processes — that bind them to the lands on which they intend to stay, ways whose expression changes over time while maintaining the same assumptions and end goals.”⁴¹ I take this definition of the settler identity to be more specifically the settler colonizer position. It is this positionality, and the ability to identify how it is portrayed and embodied, that is crucial for the analyses in the forthcoming chapters. Implicit in this definition is that it affirms that settler colonizers cannot be identified as one cohesive racial or ethnic group, and that rather, they are identified by a particular relationship to land, and by a choice to subscribe to particular settler-colonial values. Ryan Shuvera, drawing from James Baldwin’s work on whiteness, argues similarly, saying, “Settler is not a race or ethnicity. It is a constructed mentality that is lived by those who look to benefit from the historical disconnect fostered by settler colonial ways of life.”⁴² In other words, the settler colonizer identity is not defined by one’s heritage as much as it is defined by how one chooses to interact with the world—and one’s subscription to (or rejection of) the narrative of settler colonialism.

In addition to referring frequently to Indigenous peoples and settlers, in this dissertation I also attempt to provide a distinction between Indigenous people, settler colonizers, and those who are non-Indigenous and yet who are also oppressed by settler colonialism. As Lowman and Barker explain, we should not fall into an Indigenous/Settler binary because “Indigenous and Settler identity do not account for all peoples living in Canada.”⁴³ Chelsea Vowel agrees, asserting that Black people who are descended from enslaved populations should not be referred

⁴¹ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 15.

⁴² Shuvera, “Sounding Unsettlement,” 32.

⁴³ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 17.

to as settler colonizers, because of the circumstances of oppression that brought them to this land, however, she does acknowledge that non-Black persons of color can participate in reinforcing settler colonialism.⁴⁴ There is no ideal way to collectively name those who are non-Indigenous, non-settler, and to homogenize them as a group is certainly not my intention here. Although terms such as BPOC, multicultural/diverse other, minoritized groups, diasporic peoples, have been used, all of these are awkward, and all fall prey to creating a homogenous, monolithic group, rather than addressing the diverse backgrounds, cultures, experiences, and identities. However, for the sake of brevity and of clarifying the role of settler colonialism in national identity construction as I aim to do in this dissertation, I will tend to use the term minoritized others or minoritized groups because it names honestly the implications that settler colonialism has for those who are not a part of the privileged, dominant, majority.

As I am working towards an anti-colonial approach to understanding these relationships, I also use the terms neighbors, or fellow guests on the land as names which seek to honor and create new forms of relationship rather than those which reinforce stereotypes or rely on oversimplified homogenization. Victoria Wells, a Residential school survivor, explains reconciliation (or, conciliation, as many Indigenous folks affirm) in the language of neighbors. She asserted that she would know that reconciliation is happening when people knew the names of their neighboring tribes, and could greet them in their language.⁴⁵ In addition to referring to non-Indigenous, non-settlers as neighbors, I use the terms “hosts” and “guests” to point to decolonizing the relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers. I came to learn of the name “guests” through Dr Kahente Horn-Miller. When introducing herself at an event I attended,

⁴⁴ Vowel, *Indigenous Writes*, 17.

⁴⁵ Victoria Wells, cited in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Honouring the truth*, 363–64. Cited in Patrick Belanger, *Rhetoric and Settler Inertia: Strategies of Canadian Decolonization* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019), 2.

she identified herself as a Kanien:keha'ka guest on Algonquin territory, and later explained that part of decolonizing efforts involve learning what it means to be a guest on Indigenous territory.⁴⁶ Part of my work here then, is to imagine or embody what engaging as a guest on Indigenous land means and how choosing to do so operates in opposition to the settler positionality. Haudenosaunee scholar Ruth Koleszar-Green offers significant advice on what the initial steps might be for approaching life on Turtle Island as a guest rather than as a settler, and offers this distinction between the two ways:

a settler is an individual who states that they are on stolen land. They might know whose 'traditional territory' they are on, and they might wish to be a good ally, but usually a settler's intentions stop there! A Guest, on the other hand, understands through a reflexive process that as a Guest they have responsibilities to learn about rematriation of the land (including for example, stewardship and possession are foundational to environmental revitalization). The Guest learns the history and current story of the land that they are Guests on!⁴⁷

This distinction between settler and guest motivates my work in this dissertation. In Chapter Two, I explore further ways in which I foresee settlers as being able to reject their settler colonizer positionality for the purpose of engaging as guests on the land.

The analysis in the upcoming chapters takes these preceding discussions of settler identity as foundational to the critiques that I will be making. Rather than assume the cultural identity of the participants in the ceremony, I approach my judgments based on whether the characters embody settler colonial positions of listening (Robinson), and what I call looking (a reference to what other scholars call the "colonial gaze")—qualities which, when the settler position is foregrounded, are defined by extraction and consumption. Dylan Robinson calls the settler

⁴⁶ Dr Kahente Horn-Miller, "The Path Forward: Indigenous Resurgence and Reconciliation," interview by the students of POL3159 Indigenous Politics in Canada April 2, 2024, University of Ottawa. Taught this semester by Kris Millett.

⁴⁷ Ruth Koleszar-Green, "What Is a Guest? What Is a Settler?," *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry* 10, no. 2 (2018), 174.

listening positionality “hungry listening.” The name “hungry listening” comes from the word which the Stó:lō people used to describe settlers: “xwelítem.” “Xwelítem,” which means “starving person” refers to both the literal hunger the settlers experienced as they tried to occupy and adapt to a new land, but also to their greed for gold, and other resources.⁴⁸ In using this term to describe the listening positionality that settlers embody, Robinson parallels the desire for possession of physical resources with the cultural appropriation, extraction, and stereotyping that characterizes the way settlers engage with Indigenous musics.

In addition to a settler listening positionality, in this dissertation I will draw on a counterpart concept: the colonial gaze or the colonizing gaze, which we could call the settler looking positionality. Most often this term is used to describe how colonizers look at the bodies of the colonized “other,” but it can also be used to describe how settlers look at land. In defining the colonial gaze, Kalpana Ram states that it is “an unequally constituted right to scrutinize, to represent what is gazed at, and if judged necessary, to intervene and alter the object of the gaze.”⁴⁹ When occurring in film, the colonial gaze often results in viewing “colonized bodies... as entomological or zoological specimens.”⁵⁰ Discussing how this same gaze applies to landscape, Jeanne van Eeden writes, “The process of controlling the land always was contingent upon sight and surveillance, which indicates that conquest was as much cognitive as military. The notion of the possessive gaze is linked to the manner in which landscapes were presented for visual consumption by the traveler's eye.”⁵¹ The colonial gaze, or settler looking positionality, to echo Robinson’s formulation, when applied either to land or to other human bodies thus implies

⁴⁸ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 48-49.

⁴⁹ Kalpana Ram, “Gender, Colonialism, and the Colonial Gaze,” in *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2018), 1.

⁵⁰ Paula Amad, “Visual Riposte: Looking Back at the Return of the Gaze as Postcolonial Theory’s Gift to Film Studies,” *Cinema Journal* 52, no. 3 (March 22, 2013), 49.

⁵¹ Jeanne van Eeden, “The Colonial Gaze: Imperialism, Myths, and South African Popular Culture,” *Design Issues* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2004), 26.

hierarchy, ownership, treatment of the land as a resource for consumption by the colonizers—relationships to land which run counter to Indigenous ways of relating to land. In a recent conversation, two Indigenous women—Dr Kahente Horn-Miller and Lori Idlout (MP for Nunavut)—explained that this difference can be summarized as exploitation versus caretaking.⁵² In short, we could term it the settler gaze. Natalie Baloy calls this the “consumptive appetite of settler-spectators” and notes that “settler-spectator privilege involves not only engaging in acts of looking, but also looking away-away from Indigenous performance, away from conditions of settler coloniality, and away from colonial complicity.”⁵³ Throughout this dissertation, I have considered the Opening Ceremony as it was presented through the broadcast that the 2010 Olympics YouTube page shared in 2010. Once or twice in my analyses, I do make note of the role that the cameras play in mediating how our attention is directed in particular scenes. Other scholars have interviewed audience members for their experiences of the live event (and other Olympic Opening Ceremonies), and note differences between how various audience members experience and interpret the event.⁵⁴ My own interpretations here have been deeply informed by the anti-colonial position of my dissertation. Future studies may explore more in depth the role that the camera plays in mediating this and other spectacles, and how camera mediation may reinforce colonial power relations. These studies should be nuanced however, since Amad explains that “cinema’s dominant gaze, typically described in antvisual critiques as a distanced,

⁵² Dr Kahente Horn-Miller and Lori Idlout, “The Path Forward: Indigenous Resurgence and Reconciliation,” interview by the students of POL3159 Indigenous Politics in Canada April 2, 2024, University of Ottawa. Taught this semester by Kris Millett.

⁵³ Natalie J. K. Baloy, “Our Home(s) and/on Native Land: Spectacular Re-Visions and Refusals at Vancouver’s 2010 Winter Olympic Games,” *Streetnotes* 25 (2016), abstract and 209.

⁵⁴ Natalie J. K. Baloy, “Spectacle, Spectrality, and the Everyday: Settler Colonialism, Aboriginal Alterity, and Inclusion in Vancouver” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2014), 145, 151-152; John J. MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle in Modern Societies,” in *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, ed. John J. MacAloon (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984), 260.

voyeuristic, clinical, controlling, invisible, Orientalizing, and dehumanizing deployment of vision” is not necessarily “uniform” and may be countered by acts which she refers to as “return of the gaze.”⁵⁵

In the successive analytic chapters, I will make note of the ways the characters featured in the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony embody these positions of settler listening and/or settler looking, as a means of identifying them as settlers—again, a position not based on their perceived or stated ethnic background. A further consideration might be how the construction of the ceremony invites a colonial gaze from the viewers and audience. Thus, my analysis will attend not only to the ways in which the characters in the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony exhibit settler characteristics, but the ways in which the organization of the ceremony projects the Canadian identity as a settler one and invites the audience into a settler colonial engagement with the world as well.

In their study of decolonial and reconciliatory initiatives, Lynn Davis, Jeff Denis, and Raven Sinclair investigate what it might look like to change and challenge settler consciousness. In the conclusion to their project, they ask “what constitutes a challenge to settler colonial positionality?”⁵⁶ They further state: “without the critical learning and unlearning necessary to unsettle Canadian identities and name settler colonialism, reconciliation initiatives may succeed in making settlers feel good about themselves while failing to promote substantive change.”⁵⁷ Two of the research questions that their study posed have been informative as I investigate the role of the Olympics in reinforcing settler colonialism. They are “how are non-Indigenous identities constructed and non-Indigenous people positioned?” and “Are settler colonial

⁵⁵ Amad, “Visual Riposte,” 53.

⁵⁶ Lynn Davis, Jeff Denis, and Raven Sinclair, *Pathways of Settler Decolonization* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), 409.

⁵⁷ Davis et al, *Pathways*, 408.

positionalities being challenged, and if so, in what ways?”⁵⁸ By keeping these two questions in mind (and many others which will arise along this journey), my research seeks to get at the heart of approaching the Canadian national identity with an anti-colonial trajectory, acknowledging and dismantling the dangers of the settler identity and its collusion with coloniality along the way. A fuller discussion of how settler colonialism is at work in Canada is featured in Chapter One, where I summarise the relationship between Canadian nationalism and settler colonialism, argue, following Lowman and Barker and others, that Canadian nationalism operates in support of settler colonialism.

Settler Colonialism and Whiteness

One of the dangers of discussing and dismantling settler colonialism is that it can result in continuing to center settler colonialism, both by the frequent repetition and focus on the ideas, but also by how it is done. I am a settler. My work studies the rehearsal and reproduction of settler colonialism, and it is addressed to settlers. Settler colonialism and whiteness are not synonymous but are intimately connected. Lorenzo Veracini explains “Settler colonialism is a framework in which whiteness is operating as the universal.”⁵⁹ In order to avoid rehearsing settler colonial studies as centering settler identity and whiteness, I seek to position my own work as a response to Indigenous scholars and leaders, by referring to their work often, and, in the analytic portions, by not just critiquing the inclusions that are made, but also by pointing to and highlighting Indigenous acts of refusal which complicate the settler colonial narratives of absence, erasure, extraction, and the politics of recognition.

⁵⁸ Davis et al, *Pathways*, 405.

⁵⁹ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 121.

Theoretical Framework

Drawing from a wide variety of settler and Indigenous scholars and writers, I affirm that the Canadian status quo continues to operate with both overt and covert colonialism, and that working towards Indigenous freedom and sovereignty is a necessary step towards justice. As a settler occupying land on Turtle Island, I acknowledge that I have benefited from colonialism and thus share in the responsibility to recognize it and contribute to its dismantling for the sake of our shared futures on this land. Throughout this dissertation, I seek to operate within a theoretical framework of anti-colonialism—a term I use broadly to cover more specific ideas such as decolonization and decoloniality. While these terms in popular dialogue are sometimes used synonymously or interchangeably, I use them distinctively, and follow a number of scholars in attempting to do so. I use anti-colonialism as the primary overarching term. Where other scholars use decolonization as their primary term, I substitute anti-colonialism instead, unless I am quoting them directly. This conceptual distinction is important because of the number of terms being used in the field. Some scholars use anti-colonialism, some use decolonization, some decoloniality, and further, some use the term “unsettling.” Each term may have its own particular value, but there is no consensus around their use. For ease of understanding, within this dissertation, I use anti-colonialism as the overarching term for any and all processes and activity that seeks to disrupt colonial norms of all kinds. I use decolonization to refer specifically to those acts which involve restoration of land or physical settler departure. I use decoloniality to refer to intellectual, aesthetic and other forms of anti-colonialism. Finally, I have chosen not to use “unsettling” within this dissertation unless from a direct quote, since I have found the other three terms to be sufficient. Further discussion of these terms and their definitions and scholarly basis continues in the section below.

Anti-colonialism is a term often used and chosen for its present and active implications. Use of that term highlights the fact that colonialism is ongoing and that fighting against it is an active, intentional, current-day activity. Elizabeth Carlson, drawing on the work of Michael Hart explains that the term “communicates the reality and current presence of the structures and practices of (settler) colonialism.”⁶⁰ Anti-colonialism is thus used as a term in a way that is broadly synonymous with decoloniality, and has been used to describe both settler and Indigenous contributions against the colonial status-quo.⁶¹ However, Indigenous scholars writers and activists including Josephine Savarese, Sandrina de Finney, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson and others use the terms *presencing* and *resurgence* respectively to name the Indigenous activities that broadly contradict colonialism.⁶² Similarly, some settler scholars, for example Deniese Nadeau and Ryan Shuvera, use the term “unsettling” to describe the settler-based responsibilities and actions of decolonization.⁶³ While this term may offer a helpful distinction between the settler and Indigenous elements of decolonization, its more common adjectival function, while an appropriate statement regarding the process, for me serves only to cloud the conversation. Thus, I will use anti-colonialism most broadly, and draw from these terms if greater specificity is required, or when quoting these scholars. Additionally, as often as possible, I try to do my work in relationship with the work of Indigenous scholars, following Davis and

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Carlson, “Anti-Colonial Methodologies and Practices for Settler Colonial Studies,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 7, no. 4 (October 2, 2017): 5.

⁶¹ See for instance, use of this term in the Introduction of Davis et al. See also, Elizabeth Carlson, “Anti-Colonial Methodologies,” 5, in particular her personal discussion with Indigenous scholar Michael Hart.

⁶² Josephine L Savarese, “Challenging Colonial Norms and Attending to Presencing in Stories of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women,” *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 29 (1) 2017, 157-181; Sandrina De Finney, “Under the Shadow of Empire: Indigenous Girls’ Presencing as Decolonizing Force,” in Claudia Mitchell & Carrie Rentschler, *Girlhood and the Politics of Place* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2014).

⁶³ Denise Marie Nadeau, *Unsettling Spirit: A Journey into Decolonization* (Montreal; McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2020); Ryan Shuvera, “Sounding Unsettling: Rethinking Settler States of Mind and Re(-)Cognition through Scenes of Cross-Cultural Listening,” (PhD Dissertation, London, Ontario, University of Western Ontario, 2020).

co-authors explanation that “settlers’ anti-colonial learning (and unlearning) does not simply precede action; it occurs through action, through meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples and with other engaged settlers, and through experimentation with activism of various sorts.”⁶⁴

Anti-colonialism

There is no one, universally agreed upon definition of anti-colonialism. As Avril Bell and her co-authors rightly point out, anti-colonialism will look different in different places and spaces because colonialism was (and is) different in different places, and because, in most circumstances, anti-colonialism is a collaborative venture built in response to the specific parameters of the place.⁶⁵ However, despite these differences, there are some unifying elements, which enable me to shape a working definition of anti-colonialism for the purposes of the current study. Based on the work of a mix of settler and Indigenous writers including Avril Bell and her co-authors, Elizabeth Carlson, Harsha Walia, Ingrid Huygens, Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang, Lee Maracle, Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Patrick Yellow Bird, and Philip Blake, I offer this as the working definition of anti-colonialism which informs my work in this dissertation:

Anti-colonialism is an Indigenous-led process, with different but overlapping and co-intentional implications for both settlers and Indigenous peoples. For Indigenous peoples, it involves taking back, while for settlers, it requires the relinquishing of land, power, and privilege. It is built from responsibility and relationship, for the purpose of Indigenous liberation and shaping our communities through the realization of shared values.

Anti-colonial efforts are to be “Indigenous-led,” otherwise they run the risk of reinforcing the very colonial power structures and attitudes they aim to undo, implied in that is therefore a

⁶⁴ Davis et al, *Pathways*, 394.

⁶⁵ Avril Bell et al., “Enacting Settler Responsibilities towards Decolonisation,” *Ethnicities*, (December 28, 2021), 1-3. See also, Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 112. Mignolo also asserts a similar warning throughout his book, that decolonization must not become a new universal; Walter Mignolo, *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021).

settler posture of humility.⁶⁶ As Elizabeth Carlson writes, “with Indigenous resurgence at the centre of anti-colonialism, the roles of white settler academics are at the periphery, making space, and pushing back against colonial institutions, structures, practices, mentalities, and land theft.”⁶⁷ Such efforts are “co-intentional,” writes Ingrid Huygens, in that there is a shared end to the process that addresses the “unique needs of each group.”⁶⁸ Tuck and Yang emphasize that for settlers, anti-colonialism must involve the relinquishing of land, power, or privilege, while Lee Maracle adds that Indigenous people initiate the relinquishing by being active in taking back what is rightfully theirs.⁶⁹ Maracle also explains that for Indigenous people: “Decolonization in general is to take back land, space, territory and governance as well as the economy of your original country.”⁷⁰ As Waziyatawin Angela Wilson and Patrick Yellow Bird explain, the end to which these aim is indeed “Indigenous liberation.”⁷¹ Addressing non-native people, South-Asian writer in Canada Harsha Walia explains that decolonization involves “reconstituting our communities along shared values and ideals.”⁷² Similarly, in addressing a pipeline inquiry, Philip Blake, a member of the Dene nation, said: “I believe your nation might wish to see us, not as a relic from the past, but as a way of life, a system of values by which you may survive in the

⁶⁶ Davis et al, *Pathways*, 397. Carlson, “Anti-Colonial Methodologies,” 5.

⁶⁷ Carlson, “Anti-Colonial Methodologies,” 5.

⁶⁸ Ingrid Huygens, “Developing a Decolonisation Practice for Settler Colonisers: A Case Study from Aotearoa New Zealand,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 1, no. 2 (2011): 61, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2201473X.2011.10648812>. See also: Lowman and Barker, *Settler*.

⁶⁹ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012), 10, 19.

⁷⁰ Lee Maracle, *My Conversations with Canadians*, Essais; No. 4 (Toronto: BookThug, 2017), 124.

⁷¹ Waziyatawin Angela Wilson & Michael Yellow Bird, M. (eds.), *For indigenous eyes only: A decolonization handbook* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 2005), cited in “Justice as Healing: Going Outside the Colonizers Cage,” by Wanda D McCaslin and Denices C Breton in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* edited by Norman K Denzin, Yvonna S Lincoln, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, (Los Angeles: SAGE Publishing, 2008).

⁷² Harsha Walia, “Moving Beyond a Politics of Solidarity towards a Practice of Decolonization” in *Organize!: Building from the Local for Global Justice*, ed by Aziz Choudry, Jill Hanley, and Eric Shragge, (Oakland, UNITED STATES: PM Press, 2012), 250.

future. This we are willing to share.”⁷³ The work of each of these scholars and many others has come to shape my own working definition of anti-colonialism, as shared above. I view each aspect of this definition as a critical part of the understanding that I have of anti-colonialism and what it means to contribute to that work. These key points, that anti-colonial work is co-intentional, involving settlers and Indigenous peoples, and is for the purpose of Indigenous freedom helps to set anti-colonial activity apart from rhetoric, from metaphor, and from other social justice initiatives.

Explicit in this definition is the important distinction between the efforts of settlers and Indigenous peoples in anti-colonialism. As a settler, it is certainly not my place to speak to Indigenous action or intentionality. My goal here is simply to address settler responsibilities and note their parallels and relationships to Indigenous anti-colonial activity. Indigenous activity must not be confined within the anti-colonial framework (thus reinforcing a colonial posture). However, it is important to note the shared impact of these simultaneously parallel but opposite trajectories that Indigenous and settler responsibilities have. The activities of both groups are parallel in that anti-colonialism is a co-intentional activity which results in freedom/sovereignty for Indigenous peoples and provides space from which we can work forward together. They are opposite in that for settlers, much of our decolonial work will involve critiquing and decreasing the power of the empire, while Indigenous resurgence and sovereignty takes place.⁷⁴ Indigenous scholars, speaking of the elements of this trajectory for Indigenous peoples, highlight that Indigenous presencing and resurgence work to counter colonialism in all its forms.

⁷³ Philip Blake, “Statement to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry,” in Mel Watkins, *Dene Nation - the Colony Within* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 7–8, cited in Glen Coulthard, “From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?: Marx, Indigenous Peoples, and the Politics of Dispossession in Denendeh,” in *Theorizing Native Studies* (New York: Duke University Press, 2020), 72.

⁷⁴ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd Edition, (New York, Zed Books: 2021), 16.

As mentioned above, I distinguish between decolonization and decoloniality, where decolonization refers more particularly to the relinquishment of land, while decoloniality refers to the concomitant processes in the academic, intellectual realms. In doing so, I follow the work of Walter Mignolo. I use the term “decoloniality” to refer specifically to the intellectual, cultural, and academic process of divesting of colonial power and as the counterpart to the political and physical process represented by the term decolonization. As Mignolo describes in the most basic terms, the goal of decolonization is “to send the settlers home” while the purpose of decoloniality is “to undertake *epistemic reconstitution* – that is, precisely to change the terms (assumptions and rules) of the conversation rather than just the content.”⁷⁵ When Mignolo explains *epistemic reconstitution* he means that we no longer operate within a framework where colonial power has defined the terms of engagement, it means a breaking away from colonial power and allowing for multiple sets of terms rather than just a colonial set (this is further discussed in Chapter Two). Although she does not distinguish between the terms decolonization and decoloniality, Linda Tuhiwai Smith agrees that anti-colonialism requires both the “formal process of handing over the instruments of government” (i.e. what Mignolo would call decolonization) and the “long term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power”⁷⁶ (i.e. what Mignolo would call decoloniality). Similarly, carefully distinguishing between these two terms addresses the concern raised by Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang that decolonization might simply become a metaphor—a concern that is realized when decolonization remains at the level of discourse and does not involve the return of land, power, or privilege to Indigenous peoples.⁷⁷ Employing decolonization and decoloniality hand in hand

⁷⁵ Mignolo, *Politics*, 478.

⁷⁶ Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 112.

⁷⁷ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 7, 10.

alongside the work of Indigenous people can avoid the pitfalls of metaphor that Tuck and Yang highlight. Building from these theoretical positions, my work thus seeks to participate particularly in the cultural divesting of colonial power by questioning the types of narratives, knowledges, and aesthetics that are promoted within the context of national spectacles, and how these may be contributing to cultural hegemony (i.e. settler colonialism) at the expense of Indigeneity and diversity.

Having discussed the important distinctions between decolonization and decoloniality I now turn my attention specifically to addressing the settler responsibilities in the process. As mentioned above, as a settler, it is not my place to define anti-colonial activity for Indigenous peoples, nor to speak for them. However, in response to listening to Indigenous leaders and scholars, as well as other settler scholars, I focus my attention on the settler responsibilities within decoloniality, as I aim to fulfill them in this work, and encourage other settlers to be attentive to them as well. To paraphrase the work of Lee Maracle, settler responsibility is to change settler society, letting go of our multicultural and peacemaking myths, and ensuring that they are listening to the voices of Indigenous people who assert that settler society is “racist, colonial, and patriarchal.”⁷⁸ Similarly, as included in the definition above, Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang assert that decolonialization specifically requires that settlers relinquish “land, power, or privilege.”⁷⁹ If decolonization does not involve the relinquishing of those elements, it is only discourse and risks remaining in the realm of metaphor.⁸⁰ As a music scholar, my work does not specifically address issues of land or land back, however, I do seek to wrestle with constructions (and thus deconstructions or relinquishing) of power and privilege as related to cultural representations of

⁷⁸ Maracle, *My Conversations*, 50.

⁷⁹ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 10.

⁸⁰ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 7.

the peoples who occupy this land (whether rightfully or not). Dylan Robinson summarizes what anti-colonial activity might look like in musical and other performance practices: “It is necessary to acknowledge the privilege and power that we hold within our artistic and working communities, and then find ways to give over such power that move beyond forms of inclusion.”⁸¹ This concept will further be explored in Chapter Two, as I develop an analytic framework which attempts to address these forms of inclusion through multimodal analysis.

A further part of settler responsibility as mentioned above in the section on settler colonialism is understanding how non-Indigenous identities are constructed, and how settler positionality is reinforced or rejected. Bringing together my understanding of settler colonialism then, with the anti-colonial framework of this dissertation, I offer these questions as a summary of the work I undertake here: do the musical and other artistic choices in the Opening Ceremony at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic games contribute to reinforce, refuse, or revise settler colonial ideologies in their presentation of Canadian nationalism? How do they do that? Before moving on to discussing my methodology for the dissertation, I will provide a semi-thorough literature review, and further establish my work as a response to efforts of Reconciliation in Canada.

On Reconciliation

Although I do not frame it directly as such, my work here exists in part because of the processes of reconciliation that are currently occurring in Canada. One significant aspect of that work is the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which was founded in 2008 to investigate and uncover the truths of what happened in the residential school system, listen to survivors, and begin the process of reconciliation.⁸² Although the Games themselves

⁸¹Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 232.

⁸² More about the residential school system and the other tools the government used in their mission of assimilation is discussed in the History section in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

occurred prior to the results of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission being published, their findings have implications for all aspects of Indigenous/settler relations in Canada. As part of their work, the TRC posted 94 Calls to Action as well as Ten Principles for Reconciliation. Within those Ten Principles, the members of the Commission explained that “reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public Truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.”⁸³ Robinson expanded on this premise by calling for musicological redress in Canada specifically through the analysis of “multicultural and landscape-based tropes,” which, as explained earlier, forms the foundation of my work in this dissertation.⁸⁴ Overall, the work I undertake in this dissertation is reflective of the “constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism” that the Commission identified as part of the principles for reconciliation.⁸⁵ Alongside these principles however, I also hold the concept of reconciliation as put forth by the TRC lightly since there are Indigenous writers and leaders who reject the concept of reconciliation. David Garneau, for instance, suggests that the use of the term reconciliation “imposes the fiction that equanimity was the status quo between Indigenous people and Canada,” and suggests that what should occur first is instead, “conciliation.”⁸⁶ Garneau further problematizes the use of the term reconciliation because of its parallel use as a term which marks a rite of the Catholic church. He asserts that this religious model (in which an individual who has sinned is reconciled to the church), informs the secular version established in the TRC, in which individuals (Indigenous people who have been sinned against) are reconciled to the state. In place of this, Garneau calls for “nation-to-nations or

⁸³ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *What we Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation*, (Ottawa: Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015), 3.

⁸⁴ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 12.

⁸⁵ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *What We Have Learned*, 3.

⁸⁶ David Garneau, “Imaginary Spaces of Conciliation and Reconciliation: Art, Curation, and Healing,” in *Arts of Engagement*, ed. Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin (Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2016), 21–41, <https://doi.org/10.51644/9781771121705-003>, 30.

person-to-person negotiations of a conciliation or treaty model.”⁸⁷ Taiaiake Alfred similarly rejects reconciliation, because it “does nothing to help Indigenous peoples regain their dignity and strength.”⁸⁸ On the other hand, Richard Wagamese claims that reconciliation “means to create harmony” and that this is done through humility and truth, which are aligned with Indigenous values.⁸⁹ As these brief summaries show, reconciliation has different contextual meanings within the rites of the Catholic church, within secular justice contexts, and different meanings for various Indigenous peoples. Instead of enforcing a framework of reconciliation of my own imagining, I have chosen to emphasize the anti-colonial aspects of the activity I pursue here.

A Sight-Reading Tour of the (Olympic) Rings of Literature

Knowing that literature reviews are an absolutely necessary, and unfortunately often dull part of the academic writing process, I have entitled my literature review and frame it around two relevant puns. I borrow “sight-reading” from music performance practice to refer to the cursory and imperfect interactions with the texts I mention here, as well as for its proximity to the concept of sight-seeing; like tourists visiting a new location, in this review, I visit a segment of literature for the main important points, and some interesting highlights. Secondly, organizing the literature into (Olympic) “rings” helps to group the literature into roughly complementary segments, while allowing me to affirm that such segmentation is not always precisely distinct—in the same way that the Olympic Rings overlap one another, so too do the sources I have

⁸⁷ Garneau, “Imaginary Spaces,” 33.

⁸⁸ Taiaiake Alfred, “Restitution is the Real Pathway to Justice for Indigenous Peoples,” in *Response, Responsibility, and Renewal. Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Journey*, edited Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar, and Mike DeGagné, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Research Series (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009), 181.

⁸⁹ Richard Wagamese, “Returning to Harmony” in *Response, Responsibility, and Renewal. Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Journey*, edited Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar, and Mike DeGagné, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Research Series (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009), 146.

separated into different sections (see figure I.1 below). This grouping is not an entirely accurate depiction of the links between the literature groups—which would be much more intricate—but nonetheless, serves as a visual and conceptual aid for the abundance of material that is relevant to this study.

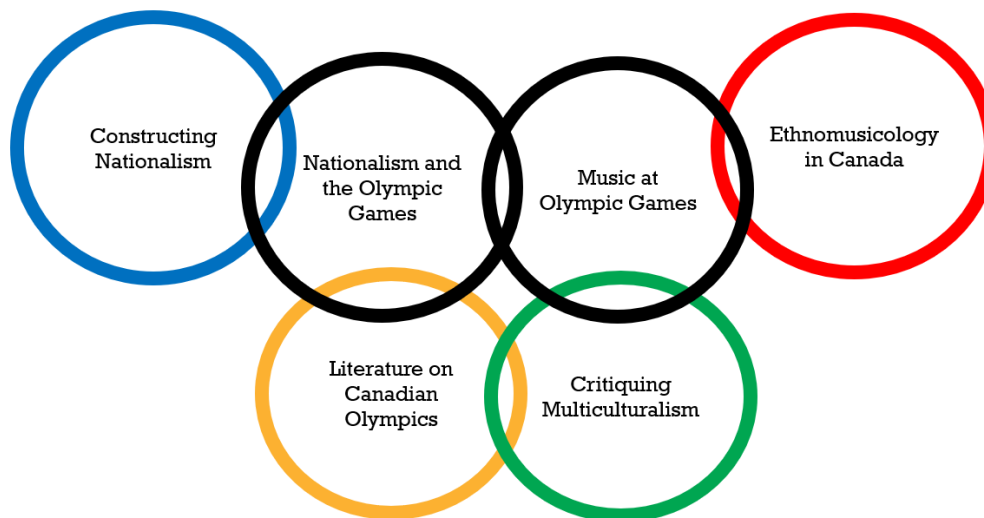


Figure I.1 The (Olympic) Rings of Literature

I first situate my study within broader theories of nationalism, before honing in on the role of the Olympics in nationalist efforts. From there, I move in two directions, first to studies of Canadian Olympics, and then to research on music at Olympic events. Each of these brings me to one further section of literature, first critiques of multiculturalism, and second, musical nationalism and Canadian music.⁹⁰ Overall, I situate my study within the context of the work of other scholars who investigate the role of Olympic events in performing national identity, and the role of spectacle in curating a particular idealized identity that may contribute to blurring a more troublesome reality (in the current study, settler colonialism). Similarly, I offer my

⁹⁰ This is of course, six rings, while there are only five in the Olympic logo.

critiques alongside the voices of numerous Indigenous and settler scholars who problematize Indigenous participation and representation at Canadian Olympic events. These critiques echo the broader assessment of multiculturalism in Canada as a tool which serves hegemonic nation building at the expense of the diverse cultures it claims to value—an embodiment of settler colonial ideals which will be discussed in later chapters.

1. Constructing Nationalism

Benedict Anderson’s now ubiquitous aphorism that a nation is an “imagined political community” rings particularly true for the Canadian nation, where diversity of population and simple geographical expanse fulfill his point that nations are imagined precisely because the members of the nation will never interact with all the others.⁹¹ As Jody Berland insightfully summarizes, most citizens of Canada do not share a common sense of “history, language, ethnicity, religion, or belief.”⁹² Following Anderson, Nathan Kalman-Lamb states, “Nation is an idea...it is a remarkably fragile construct requiring frequent rehearsal.”⁹³ It is this concept of rehearsal that informs my overarching research question in this dissertation, that is, what sort of nation is being rehearsed in the cultural portion of the Vancouver Olympics. As my theoretical framing makes clear, I argue that it is a settler colonial nation that is being rehearsed. While Anderson’s later sentiment may ring true at some level, “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation...the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship,” it is my observation in this dissertation that the community being rehearsed within the Opening Ceremony is about anything but deep and horizontal comradeship. The anti-colonial literature

⁹¹ Benedict R. O’G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. ed., ACLS Humanities E-Book, (London; Verso, 2006), 6.

⁹² Jody Berland, “Marginal Notes on Cultural Studies in Canada,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (1995): 519, <https://doi.org/10.3138/utq.64.4.514>.

⁹³ Nathan Kalman-Lamb, “‘A Portrait of This Country’: Whiteness, Indigeneity, Multiculturalism and the Vancouver Opening Ceremonies,” *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 27 (2012), 9.

discussed above aids in illuminating this. The relationship between nationalism and settler colonialism will be more fully discussed in the first chapter, where I focus on how these processes serve one another within the Canadian context.

2. Nationalism and the Olympics

It is well known that the Olympic opening ceremonies serve as an important international stage for enacting or rehearsing a national identity. Philip D'Agati's monograph describes that Olympic opening ceremonies have been a primary location for staging nationalist ideas, especially since the Moscow games of 1980.⁹⁴ Cath Ellis attributes this partially to the Cold War context of the time with Moscow and Los Angeles each attempting to "out do [*sic*] each other" through more and more spectacular displays.⁹⁵ Chris Arning affirms that the Moscow ceremony "set the precedent" for "marshalling of massive numbers of people," and that this technique is an expression of "soft power."⁹⁶ D'Agati also notes the role of the Olympics in providing legitimacy for certain regimes (i.e. Nazi Olympics, Berlin 1936) and summarizes that the Berlin Olympics initiated the levels of synchronization and pageantry that have become typical of Opening Ceremonies today.⁹⁷ These sources summarize the historical precedent for how nationalism is presented at the Opening ceremonies of Olympic games, and provide brief summaries of example ceremonies. Although my work draws on some concepts that D'Agati illuminates, I depart from his ideas in that I see the nationalism at the Olympics as being dangerous, while one of his goals is to dismantle that myth.

⁹⁴ Philip A. D'Agati, *Nationalism on the World Stage: Cultural Performance at the Olympic Games* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2011).

⁹⁵ Cath Ellis, "The Possessive Logic of Settler-Invader Nations in Olympic Ceremonies," *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 10, no. 2 (2012), 6.

⁹⁶ Chris Arning, "Soft Power, Ideology and Symbolic Manipulation in Summer Olympic Games Opening Ceremonies: A Semiotic Analysis," *Social Semiotics* 23, no. 4 (September 1, 2013), 527.

⁹⁷ D'Agati, *Nationalism*, 27.

In his monograph on the subject, Philip D'Agati divides the history of the Olympics into 4 eras, (Ancient Games, Rebirth, Interwar, and Post-WW2), and also makes special note of the 1936 Berlin Olympics or "Nazi Olympics." Nationalism at each Games in these eras varied, but can be generally summarized. In the era of Ancient Games, the Games were hosted in Greece by city states, so nationalism was of little relevance, and instead city pride held importance.⁹⁸ In the era of Rebirth, from 1892 until 1912, the national significance of hosting the games was of little importance, and in this era, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) invited cities to host rather than having the now-known bid process for hosting. This era was also contentious as the IOC worked to discern which nations or groups could be allowed to participate—resulting in rules and suggestions that are still complicated.⁹⁹ In the Interwar period, and in the spirit of recovering an international community after WWI, the Olympic Games were given a new symbol, motto, and oath. The symbol is the five interlocking colored rings we know today, which are meant to symbolize "peace, harmony and equality."¹⁰⁰ As D'Agati explains, this was a period of "revitalization and growth" through such developments as the new symbols and motto, and also "exclusion and retribution," for example as Germany was excluded from the 1920 Olympics. This era was also when the first ever Winter Olympic Games were held, in 1924 in Paris. D'Agati actually goes so far as to credit the Berlin Games with formally introducing the level of nationalist displays common today as "an official element of the Olympic Games."¹⁰¹ While Nazi ideology was present in the background during the 1936 German Games, the events certainly offered an opportunity for Germany to present a reinvented national identity and proclaim the legitimacy of that nation, which they did through "complicated manifestations, such

⁹⁸ D'Agati, *Nationalism*, 12.

⁹⁹ D'Agati, *Nationalism*, 20.

¹⁰⁰ D'Agati, *Nationalism*, 21.

¹⁰¹ D'Agati, *Nationalism*, 27.

as choreographed music, dance, and light displays at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.”¹⁰² The Post-WWII era was one of evolution: nationalism gradually became more overt, and the ceremonies moved away from purely ritualistic elements and continued to become more spectacular.¹⁰³ As political decolonization took place, more nations gained independence and were enabled to compete under their own flags, and D’Agati identifies this as one of the last most impactful factors on the influence of nationalism in the Olympic movement.¹⁰⁴ D’Agati notes that at the Calgary Games, a complex mix of identities had to be incorporated, including: regional, immigrant, First Nations, and the dual settler identity—French and English, although he concludes that the ceremony celebrated a primarily regional (that is, Western Canadian) identity.¹⁰⁵ D’Agati rehearses a settler colonial view of these identities though when he refers to the First Nation’s groups as “Canada’s indigenous people.”¹⁰⁶ D’Agati affirms that “National performance through the Olympics becomes the means of reinforcing previously existing written or oral narratives of national identity or as a channel through which particular chronicles are revised.”¹⁰⁷ However, I distance my own work from D’Agati’s since his work seeks to dismiss the idea that nationalism at the Olympics is dangerous, while I follow Robinson’s assertion that displays of nationalism are far from “benign.”¹⁰⁸

Two other studies provide overview material of the influence of power and settler colonialism at various Olympic Games. Chris Arning’s analyses of soft power at several Olympic opening ceremonies identifies six main techniques which are used to display the

¹⁰² D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 26.

¹⁰³ D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 29.

¹⁰⁴ D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 31.

¹⁰⁵ D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 172, 175.

¹⁰⁶ D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 173.

¹⁰⁷ D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 36.

¹⁰⁸ D’Agati, *Nationalism*, 64. Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 12.

success of a country without relying on hard power or military might.¹⁰⁹ Arning's six categories are: "mass orchestration, technological prowess, symbolic ingenuity, aesthetic enchantment, whimsy and humour, and musical grandeur."¹¹⁰ Summarizing Olympic opening ceremonies held in settler invader nations from 1956–2010, Cath Ellis found an overall progression from little to no reference of Indigenous peoples, to homogenizing inclusion, to practices of welcome which continue to limit Indigenous agency and sovereignty.¹¹¹ She summarized, "telling the story of ordinary indigenous sovereignty does not come quite so easily or obviously within a settler-invader storytelling framework; its integration into the national stories of colonized nations has been haphazard, limited and derivative."¹¹² My own observations in this study align with her conclusion, as the following chapters will demonstrate.

Numerous smaller studies, including those by Taeko Teshima and Andrew Jones, Ryan Thomas and Mary Antony, and Maria Rocha investigate the particular nationalisms that are portrayed during the ceremonies of the Nagano 1998, London 2012, and Rio 2016 Olympic games respectively.¹¹³ Further, Jongsoo Lee and Hyunsun Yoon contrast the uniqueness of Chinese identity in the nationalism of the Beijing 2008 ceremony with the more multicultural emphasis at the London 2012 ceremony.¹¹⁴ Catherine Baker also notes this multicultural emphasis at the London Opening Ceremony, describing the event as an instance of public

¹⁰⁹ Arning, "Soft Power," 537.

¹¹⁰ Arning, "Soft Power," 526

¹¹¹ Ellis, "Possessive Logic," 27.

¹¹² Ellis, "Possessive Logic," 27.

¹¹³ Taeko Teshima and Andrew Jones, "Nationalism and Religious Abjection in the 1998 Nagano Olympics Opening Ceremony," *Intersections: Gender, History & Culture in the Asian Context*, no. 25 (2011), <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue25/teshima.htm>; Ryan Thomas and Mary Antony, "Competing Constructions of British National Identity: British Newspaper Comment on the 2012 Olympics Opening Ceremony," *Media, Culture & Society* 37, no. 3 (2015): 493–503, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443715574671>; Maria Eduarda Da Mota Rocha, "Nationalism and diversity: the Esquenta and the Opening Ceremony of the Rio 2016 Olympics," *Politica & Sociedade* 16, no. 35 (2017): 159–77, <https://doi.org/10.5007/2175-7984.2017v16n35p159>.

¹¹⁴ Jongsoo Lee and Hyunsun Yoon, "Narratives of the Nation in the Olympic Opening Ceremonies: Comparative Analysis of Beijing 2008 and London 2012," *Nations and Nationalism* 23, no. 4 (2017): 952–69, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12318>.

history, which aimed to show Britain's history not as one primary narrative, but as the sum of many narratives—a mosaic metaphor which has also been used to describe Canadian multiculturalism.¹¹⁵ While some ceremonies emphasize nationalism more strongly than others, Alan Tomlinson points out the contradiction of national pride against the Olympic ideals of universalism and globalization, and offers brief analyses of opening ceremonies from 1984–1994, though he omits the Calgary 1988 Games.¹¹⁶ Similarly, Rodanthe Tzanelli argues that the London Olympic Opening Ceremony in 2012 navigated performing national histories within Olympic principles and served to promote the nation for the purpose of tourism.¹¹⁷

Scholars note that the nature of national spectacles (particularly the Olympic Games) is such that an idealized, rather than a realistic, identity is portrayed. In an early text that has been widely referenced, John MacAloon considers the relationship between spectacle and festival, ritual and game.¹¹⁸ According to MacAloon, theorizing the Olympic games as a spectacle facilitates the opportunity to address the distance between image and reality. MacAloon asserts: “if the images of shared humanity generated by the Games simply ignore the structural realities that separate men from one another... then the spectacle has made us victims of the most dangerous illusions.”¹¹⁹ Although spectators may be caught up in the brilliance of the spectacle, it is necessary, following MacAloon's warning, to investigate what illusions these spectacles

¹¹⁵ Catherine Baker, “Beyond the Island Story?: The Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games as Public History,” *Rethinking History* 19, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 409–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642529.2014.909674>.

¹¹⁶ Alan Tomlinson, “Olympic Spectacle: Opening Ceremonies and Some Paradoxes of Globalization,” *Media, Culture & Society* 18, no. 4 (1996): 583–602, <https://doi.org/10.1177/016344396018004005>.

¹¹⁷ Rodanthe Tzanelli, *Olympic Ceremonialism and the Performance of National Character: From London 2012 to Rio 2016* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), https://ocul-uo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UO/1f21nf8/alma991005189399705161.

¹¹⁸ John J. MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle in Modern Societies,” in *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, ed. John J. MacAloon (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984).

¹¹⁹ MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle,” 273. For the role of sport in this, see Anouk Belanger, “The Urban Sport Spectacle: Towards a Critical Political Economy of Sport,” in *Marxism, Cultural Studies, and Sport*, ed. Ben Carrington & Ian McDonald (New York: Routledge, 2009).

may be rehearsing. Similarly, Dylan Robinson borrows Richard Dyer's work on utopian sensibility to explain "the qualities of multicultural spectacle found in Olympic celebrations."¹²⁰ Dyer theorizes entertainment as "the images of 'something better' to escape into, or something we want deeply that our day-to-day lives don't provide."¹²¹ Robinson affirms then, that spectacles and performances such as the Olympics exist basically to check the boxes of inclusionary politics and promote "utopian feelings."¹²² These Olympic spectacles, with all their pageantry and the escape to a constructed utopia harken back to Richard Wagner's goal of "depicting the idealized nation back to itself" in his operatic spectacles.¹²³ Following MacAloon and Dyer, it is evident that the nature of the spectacle blinds spectators to the realities of what is being represented and how those representations conflict with reality. The task of the decolonial scholar then, as I will pursue throughout this dissertation, is to delve beneath the spectacular surface of these events and question how injustice is woven into the structures that are being celebrated. The concept of content vs structure forms the main argument of Chapter Two of this dissertation.

Two common characteristics of exclusionary power that are evident in nationalist displays at Olympic ceremonies include the marginalization of women and ethnic others. These representations can gain legitimacy via the nature of the spectacle. In analysing the Sydney 2000 games, Heinz Housel observes how multicultural narratives are employed to create nationalist sentiment that reinforces whiteness as a frame of reference, concluding that the ceremony performed a history of the nation that emphasized progress and "subsumed" Aboriginal

¹²⁰ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 213.

¹²¹ Richard Dyer, *Only Entertainment*, 2d Edition, (London: Routledge, 2002), 20. Cited in Robinson, 213.

¹²² Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 216.

¹²³ Curtis, *Music Makes the Nation*, 52.

culture.¹²⁴ Jackie Hogan affirms that Olympic Games contribute to narratives of nation that are often “gendered and ethnicized.”¹²⁵ Through case studies of Nagano 1998, Sydney 2000, and Salt Lake City 2002, Hogan concludes that women and people of color are pushed to the periphery of national identity. Hogan further notes a certain ambiguity in the way that Indigenous peoples were represented at both Sydney and Salt Lake City that “allows the audience to interpret the power relations between the colonizers and the colonized according to their own inclinations.”¹²⁶ These exclusions and ambiguities serve as examples of the “dangerous illusions” to which MacAloon referred. As the successive chapters of this dissertation will further address, it is the responsibility of decolonial scholars then, to avoid the glittering lights of spectacle and investigate how Olympic (and other) spectacles contribute to reinforcing colonial attitudes and hegemonic constructions of cultures.

3. Literature on Canadian Olympics

Studies and critiques of Indigenous participation and representation at Canadian games consistently observe the contentious relationship between Olympics committees and First Nations, and highlight absence and stereotyping in the cultural programming. Dylan Robinson observes that the cultural Olympiad of Vancouver 2010 stereotyped Indigenous cultures. He concluded that these events served to “flatten difference” and contributed to the “infantilization of Indigenous culture.”¹²⁷ This trend is evident throughout each Canadian Olympic event. Beginning with the Montreal games in 1976, Janice Forsyth observed that despite the participation of Indigenous peoples in the closing ceremonies, lack of Indigenous agency

¹²⁴ Teresa Heinz Housel, “Australian Nationalism and Globalization: Narratives of the Nation in the 2000 Sydney Olympics’ Opening Ceremony,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 24, no. 5 (2007): 451, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180701695348>.

¹²⁵ Jackie Hogan, “Staging The Nation: Gendered and Ethnicized Discourses of National Identity in Olympic Opening Ceremonies,” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 27, no. 2 (2003): 100–123.

¹²⁶ Jackie Hogan, “Staging the Nation,” 116.

¹²⁷ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 214-215.

resulted in stereotyping of Aboriginal peoples as “culturally static, homogeneous.”¹²⁸ In her study of the Vancouver 2010 Games, Forsyth concludes that increased inclusion was not demonstrative of changing power dynamics between Settlers and Indigenous peoples.¹²⁹ K. B. Wamsley and Mike Heine observed similar patterns in the Calgary Games of 1988, though these games were more controversial because of the Lubicon Cree protest against the games, and against oil production—one of Calgary’s main industries.¹³⁰ Following the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, Christine O’Bonsawin asserted that while the event was applauded for the supposed progressive inclusion of Indigenous participation, the political climate in British Columbia, where Indigenous land treaties are still under negotiation, actually made it necessary.¹³¹ Nathan Kalman-Lamb also concludes that the Indigenous participation at the Opening Ceremony of the Van10 games was a performance of “official multiculturalism” which decreased throughout the ceremony, finally disappearing into a celebration that reinforced hegemonic whiteness.¹³² Several further studies mention Indigenous participation and representation, but more broadly discuss winter sports and the Olympics as part of efforts to curate a national Canadian identity, and focus on media, advertising, and commercial products.¹³³ Natalie Baloy’s analysis of the

¹²⁸ Janice Forsyth, “Tee-Pees and Tomahawks: Aboriginal Cultural Representation at the 1976 Olympic Games,” in *Proceedings and Newsletter-North American Society for Sport History*, 2002, 73.

¹²⁹ Janice Forsyth, “The Illusion of Inclusion: Agenda 21 and the Commodification of Aboriginal Culture in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games,” *Public* 27, no. 53 (June 1, 2016): 22–34.

¹³⁰ Kevin B. Wamsley and Michael Heine, “Don’t Mess with the Relay—It’s Bad Medicine’: Aboriginal Culture and the 1988 Winter Olympics,” in *Olympic Perspectives: Third International Symposium for Olympic Research*, vol. 3 (University of Western Ontario, Centre for Olympic Research London, ON, 1996), 174.

¹³¹ Christine M. O’Bonsawin, “A Coast Salish Olympic Welcome: The 2010 Vancouver Opening Ceremony and the Politics of Indigenous Participation,” *Proceedings: International Symposium for Olympic Research*, (2010), 255.

¹³² Nathan Kalman-Lamb, “‘A Portrait of This Country’: Whiteness, Indigeneity, Multiculturalism and the Vancouver Opening Ceremonies,” *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 27 (2012): 5–27.

¹³³ Andreja Milasincic, “Winter Sport Nationalism: The Canadian Olympic Press from Calgary 1988 to Vancouver 2010” (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 2017); Steven J. Mock, “‘Whose Game They’re Playing’: Nation and Emotion in Canadian TV Advertising during the 2010 Winter Olympics,” *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 12, no. 1 (2012): 206–26; Marianne van Oosten, “Canadian Pride During the Vancouver 2010 Olympics” (Master’s Thesis, Carleton University, Ottawa, 2011); Helene Vosters, “Sochi Olympics 2014, Canadian Truth and Reconciliation, and the Haunting Ghouls of Canadian Nationalism,” in *Performance Studies in Canada*, ed. Marlis Schweitzer and Laura Levin (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2017).

Vancouver 2010 Games noted the mixed response of observers to the Olympics, some viewed it as a “progressive” development in the story of the nation, while some found the emphasis on Indigeneity to be unfamiliar.¹³⁴ Richard Baka provides an analysis of the Opening Ceremony alongside the official requirements for these events of the International Olympic Committee. He also surveys some of both critical and public responses to the Opening Ceremony, noting the mixed response and also the absence of visible minorities from the Van10 opening ceremonies.¹³⁵

The relationship between state and Indigenous peoples in Canada has not remained static and this can be seen in the changing representations at consecutive Olympic opening ceremonies. Jennifer Adese, a Cree-Métis scholar evaluates the portrayal and participation of Indigenous peoples throughout each of the Canadian Olympic events and the preparations that led to them, and concludes that the events develop a “multicultural discourse” that serves to obscure the racist and colonial history of settler-Indigenous relations.¹³⁶ Adese discusses how the evolution of multicultural ideas is evident in the successive ceremonies, and how the perception and representation of Indigenous peoples has also evolved. Listing the dates of each subsequent Olympic event that Canada has hosted, she writes, “Indigenous peoples have ‘played Indian’ (1976), ‘played Native’ (1988), and ‘played Aboriginal’ (2010)...”¹³⁷ Like the work of other scholars mentioned above demonstrates, the multicultural rhetoric and exclusionary nationalism of Canadian Olympic ceremonies requires careful and nuanced investigation. While their

¹³⁴ Natalie J. K. Baloy, “Spectacle, Spectrality, and the Everyday: Settler Colonialism, Aboriginal Alterity, and Inclusion in Vancouver” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2014), 151-152.

¹³⁵ Richard Baka, “Winter Olympic Games Opening Ceremonies: Did Vancouver 2010 Try to Raise the Bar Too High? (Vancouver, British Columbia)(Report),” *Proceedings: International Symposium for Olympic Research*, 2010267, 272.

¹³⁶ Jennifer Adese, “Colluding with the Enemy? Nationalism and Depictions of ‘Aboriginality’ in Canadian Olympic Moments,” *American Indian Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2012): 497.

¹³⁷ Adese, “Colluding,” 495.

critiques all echo the decolonial strategies I pursue in this dissertation, none of these scholars gives in-depth consideration to how the music contributes to the stereotyping of Indigeneity or rehearsal of whiteness that they observe in the overall ceremonies and events. My intent is not to speak for Indigenous peoples, but to speak alongside and with them as we investigate how settler colonial attitudes seem to permeate these events. Estee Fresco similarly concludes that Canadian Olympic events tend to serve settler colonial interests “at the expense of Indigenous peoples’ well-being” through her analysis of the commodities and commercial practices associated with the events.¹³⁸ As with many others, before the games even begun, Robyn Bourgeois drew attention to the disjuncture between the relationship that the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) sought to portray with Indigenous peoples and the reality for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. She calls this relationship a construction that hides how VANOC is complicit in continuing coloniality by imaging a certain kind of nation that erases the conflicted history and presents an idealist reality.¹³⁹

In previous scholarship, the music at Vancouver 2010 has been considered part of a positive and cohesive national narrative. Bethany Marie Tovell argues, from a narratological framework, that the entire Olympic event in Vancouver, from the Opening Ceremony through the sports events and the closing ceremony, presented a coherent narrative that celebrated Canadian culture. She explains that the music contributed to this narrative through reinforcing action and providing emotional impulse.¹⁴⁰ Tovell employs literary critic Seymour Chatman’s theoretical model of narrative structure to facilitate her analysis. In Chatman’s model, a narrative

¹³⁸ Estee Fresco, “Impassioned Objects And Seething Absences: The Olympics In Canada, National Identity and Consumer Culture” (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 2015), 215.

¹³⁹ Robyn Bourgeois, “Deceptive Inclusion: The 2010 Vancouver Olympics and Violence Against First Nations People,” *Canadian Woman Studies* 27, no. 2/3 (2009): 39, 41.

¹⁴⁰ Bethany-Marie Tovell, “Spectacle and Sport: Narrative Tenets and the Inclusion of Music in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies” (Master’s thesis, Canada, University of Windsor, 2013), 85.

requires structured components including events, characters and setting, and forms of expression.¹⁴¹ Positioning the athletes as characters, and the music as one of the forms of expression, Tovell concludes that the Olympic events could be interpreted as a complete narrative. Similarly, Carolyn Kotva holds a relatively positive view of the inclusion of Indigenous participation in the Vancouver 2010 ceremonies and observes that there is less marginalization than occurs in the Calgary Olympics.¹⁴² In contrast, by employing a decolonial framework, and close reading and multimodal methodologies, in the following chapters I argue that a coherent narrative is not evident in these ceremonies. I observe that moments of disjuncture between the musical, visual, and textual elements allow us to question the “coherent” narratives of multiculturalism that construct Canada’s national identity.

4. Music at Olympic Games

To further support my analyses, I draw on literature that addresses the use of music at Olympics outside of Canada. These studies affirm that in Olympic contexts, music adds power to narrative and ritual, and can help to rehearse or resist cultural hierarchies. In her study of the 1988 Seoul Olympics, Margaret Dilling found that the sounds of the music used at the ceremonies is aligned with the story being told, and serves “as a model of inter-cultural exchange.”¹⁴³ Francesca Lawson’s study of the Beijing 2008 Games similarly observes how music can serve as a cross-cultural bridge by noting that music can help to avoid the “estrangement” or “boredom” that might occur for outside audiences observing rituals. In analysing the Opening Ceremony, she affirms the “synchronized power of music and ritual” in

¹⁴¹ Tovell, “Spectacle and Sport,” 41.

¹⁴² Carolyn Kotva, “Branding National Identity in the Musical Performances of the 1988 Calgary and 2010 Vancouver Olympic Opening Ceremonies” (Master’s thesis, Ottawa, Carleton University, 2010), 46.

¹⁴³ Tovell, “Spectacle and Sport,” 28. Tovell summarises Dilling’s article, which I haven’t been able to gain access to. Margaret Dilling, “The Familiar and the Foreign: Music as Medium of Exchange in the Seoul Olympic Ceremonies,” in *Toward one world beyond all barriers: The Seoul Olympiad Anniversary Conference*, ed. Koh Byong-Ik, and Park Heung-Soo (Seoul, Korea, Seoul Olympic Sports Promotion Foundation, 1990).

“transfixing the audience.”¹⁴⁴ Like Dilling and Lawson, Leonardo Boccia agrees that music is a powerful ally in narrating the history of the national culture that Olympic opening ceremonies attempt to portray. Discussing the music at the Athens 2004 ceremony, Boccia explains that the use of the sixth movement of Mahler’s Symphony No 3 aided in portraying peaceful international relations and positioning Greece as the origin of Western civilization.¹⁴⁵ John Richardson and Claudia Gorbman note that music can help to set the narrative agenda of an audio-visual event (such as Olympic ceremonies) and also observe that the music used at a ceremony may be reinterpreted by the accompanying drama or text. Richardson and Gorbman use the London 2012 Opening Ceremony which featured Herbert Parry’s hymn, “Jerusalem” and music from the film, *Chariots of Fire*, as a case study. While they note the colonial ideals present in each of these musical excerpts, Richardson and Gorbman assert that the humorous performance of the theme song from *Chariots of Fire*, featuring actor Rowan Atkinson (known for playing Mr. Bean) provided an “ironic twist” that helped to “deconstruct the film’s nationalism.”¹⁴⁶ Depending on how it is used, music at spectacles like this can serve contradictory purposes, and it is in the combination of music with other media that meanings can be constructed or refuted. This will be evident throughout the analytic chapters of this dissertation as I point to how music aids in rehearsing, revising, or refusing particular meanings and narratives.

¹⁴⁴ Francesca R. Sborgi Lawson, “Music in Ritual and Ritual in Music: A Virtual Viewer’s Perceptions about Liminality, Functionality, and Mediatization in the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games,” *Asian Music* 42, no. 2 (2011): 7. Xi Cui similarly affirms the ritualistic nature of the media spectacle of the Beijing Opening Ceremony, noting its nationalist emphases, though doesn’t refer to the role of music, see Xi Cui, “Media Events Are Still Alive: The Opening Ceremony of the Beijing Olympics as a Media Ritual,” *International Journal Of Communication* 7 (2013): 1220–35.

¹⁴⁵ Leonardo V. Boccia, “Aesthetic Convergences: Comparing Spectacular Key Audibles and Visuals of Athens and Beijing Olympic Opening Ceremonies,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no. 16 (2012): 2267, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523367.2012.744521>.

¹⁴⁶ John Richardson and Claudia Gorbman, “Introduction,” in *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics*, ed. John Richardson, Carol Vernallis, and Claudia Gorbman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 13–14.

5. Ethnomusicology in Canada

A common theme within literature on Canadian music is one of diversity. In order to situate my understanding of the music employed at the Vancouver 2010 ceremonies, I contextualize my study within other conversations about music in Canada. These studies tend to illuminate the extent to which the Vancouver Olympics actually paint a severely limited picture of Canada's music-scape. For instance, Elaine Keillor's *Music in Canada* offers an extensive overview of the field, while the volume edited by Beverley Diamond and Robert Witmer provides an example of more critical studies of the relationship between music and construction of national identity in Canada.¹⁴⁷ The more recent edited volume, *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, offers insights into specific musical practices in Canada—aiding in understanding those which are used within the opening ceremonies, and making note of those which are absent. This volume also exemplifies the nuanced approach that is required when evaluating intercultural collaborations or “fusion programming.” As Rebecca Draisey-Collishaw points out, even programs that are marketed as fusion can reinforce cultural hierarchies, a technique that I demonstrate is present in the Opening Ceremony.¹⁴⁸ Mary Ingraham echoes these concerns through her discussion of how Indigenous peoples are represented in Canadian opera, concluding that these works tend to take “a hierarchical approach to musical citizenship in a Canadian nation.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006); Beverly Diamond and Robert Witmer, eds., *Canadian Music Issues of Hegemony and Identity - University of Ottawa* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1994).

¹⁴⁸ Sherry Johnson, Judith Klassen, and Anna Hoefnagels, *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019).

¹⁴⁹ Mary Ingraham, “The Other Within: Negotiating Musical Citizenship in Canadian Opera,” in *Opera in a Multicultural World*, ed. Mary Ingraham, Joseph So, and Roy Moodley (Routledge, 2015), 73.

6. Critiquing Multiculturalism

A frequently raised critique of Canadian nationalism recognizes that official multiculturalism operates within a Eurocentric frame and contributes to the erasure of Indigenous identity and the essentializing of other ethnic identities. Eva Mackey's extensively cited study demonstrated that while multiculturalism is frequently present in Canadian rhetoric, the presence or representation of Indigenous peoples at various cultural "sites" (including the 1992 Canada 125th celebrations) resulted in marginalization or omission.¹⁵⁰ Himani Bannerji offers similarly scathing critiques, making clear that the language of multiculturalism inscribes minorities with inferiority and negativity. She explains that multiculturalism was used as a manipulative marker of superiority in the English/French cultural war in Canada and that it contributes to the "ideological construction of 'Canada.'" ¹⁵¹ As Michael Kennedy also asserts, "The minority culture, then, is marginalized through repression and romanticism and then, finally by an outright rejection of its authority over the interpretation of its own culture."¹⁵² Although Kennedy is speaking of Gaelic cultures in Nova Scotia, his words echo the disturbing and poignant critique of multiculturalism that Mackey and Bannerji offer. Natasha Bakht discusses multiculturalism specifically related to the arts. She affirms that multiculturalism enforces a categorization that stereotypes and essentializes, and calls for a recognition of the limitations such policies and

¹⁵⁰ Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

¹⁵¹ Himani Bannerji, "On the Dark Side of the Nation: Politics of Multiculturalism and the State of 'Canada,'" in *Canadian Cultural Studies*, edited by Sourayan Mookerjee, Imre Szeman, and Gail Faurschou, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 328. For further critiques, see also Neil Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, Rev. and updated. (Toronto: Penguin, 2002).

¹⁵² Michael Kennedy, *Gaelic Nova Scotia: An Economic, Cultural and Social Impact Study*, Report. Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, Nova Scotia Department of Culture and Tourism, 2001., 7-8. Cited in Heather Sparling, "Taking the Piss Out: Presentational and Participatory Elements in Cape Breton Milling Frolics," in *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, ed. Anna Hoefnagels, Judith Klassen, and Sherry Johnson (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 135.

categorizations offer.¹⁵³ Listening and hearing these critiques invites us to carefully reconsider how the narrative of multiculturalism in Canada is so broadly praised, while contributing to such pain.¹⁵⁴

Methodology

The methodology that informs my analysis is known as Multimodal Analysis, or, more particularly, Multimodal Discourse Analysis. Based on Lori Burns' definition (which itself draws on the work of Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen), I define the Olympic Opening Ceremony as a multimodal event, which involves "the artistic integration of multiple semiotic modes within one media text," that is, the music, visuals, and texts presented in the ceremony itself.¹⁵⁵ Frequently, my analysis will also refer to paratextual materials, most often the Media Guide for the Opening Ceremony, a booklet provided to media companies to inform their commentaries.¹⁵⁶ Multimodal Discourse Analysis, or MDA, has a very broad range of applications but originated in linguistics and social semiotics as a means of explaining the relationship between aspects of text to one another and later, to different modes of communication—including such elements as speech, gaze, gesture etc. It was further developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen with particular attention to art and visual modes of communication and has been advanced as an analytic tool for popular music videos by David Machin, Lori

¹⁵³ Natasha Bakht, "Mere 'Song and Dance': Complicating the Multicultural Imperative in the Arts," in *Pluralism in the Arts in Canada: A Change Is Gonna Come*, ed. Charles C. Smith (Ottawa: Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives, 2012), 1–13.

¹⁵⁴ See also: Robyn Maynard, *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present* (Halifax; Fernwood Publishing, 2017).

¹⁵⁵ Lori Burns, "Interpreting Transmedia and Multimodal Narratives: Steven Wilson's 'The Raven That Refused to Sing,'" in *The Routledge Companion to Popular Music Analysis*, ed. Ciro Scotto, Kenneth M. Smith, and John Brackett (New York: Routledge, 2018), 96.

¹⁵⁶ The Media Guide is a document which each Olympic Committee circulates to media outlets before the Opening Ceremonies to provide commentary and expositions of the material which will be featured in the ceremony. I accessed the Media Guide through the City of Vancouver Archives. Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) fonds, City of Vancouver Archive, Box: 819-A-02 fld 02 Reference Code: AM1550-S03. <https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/vanoc>

Burns, and others. Multimodal Discourse Analysis comes out of Critical Discourse Analysis, which is primarily interested in uncovering underlying values and ideologies, and how the semiotic choices “play a part in the communication of power relations.”¹⁵⁷ This facet of multimodal discourse analysis makes it a particularly potent tool when used in alignment with the anti-colonial theoretical framework that informs my work in this dissertation.

Using multimodality as my methodology allows me to investigate how the interaction of music, text, and visual elements contributes to the construction of national narratives. Because each of these media, or modes, makes meaning alone, multimodality addresses both the independence and dependence of the modes, and further seeks how they make meaning together.¹⁵⁸ As a methodology, multimodality first analyses each mode independently, before combining the modes in order to interpret their meaning as a whole. Burns explains,

My overarching concern is that a multimodal analytic methodology should do justice to the individual expressive channels before attempting to draw interpretive multimodal conclusions. I would even go so far as to argue that it is in the peeling apart of the layers that the real multimodal analysis and interpretation take place. In my experience, it is the separation of the layers for rigorous consideration that leads to my most advanced understanding of a multimodal work.¹⁵⁹

Responding to Burns’ assertions here, in my use of Multimodal Discourse Analysis, I take the same approach: interpreting the layers of the multimodal event separately, before attempting to understand their interactions. Such a process enables a close reading of each channel, or semiotic resource, for attention to their independent meanings and treatment within the ceremony, and the

¹⁵⁷ David Machin and Andrea Mayr, *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis: A Multimodal Approach* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 10.

¹⁵⁸ Carey Jewitt, Josephus Johannes Bezemer, and Kay L. O’Halloran, *Introducing Multimodality* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 2–3.

¹⁵⁹ Lori Burns, “Dynamic Multimodality in Extreme Metal Performance Video: Dark Tranquility’s ‘Uniformity.’” Directed by Patric Ullaeus” in *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Popular Music Video Analysis*, ed. Lori Burns and Stan Hawkins (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 198.

ideology that informs their construction, inclusion, and then relationship to the other resources presented.

While multimodal approaches are most often applied in music to the study of popular music videos, the technique provides a means of gaining fruitful insights for the combination of media within large spectacles such as the Olympic Opening Ceremonies and similar events where music, visual elements, and texts are presented simultaneously.¹⁶⁰ The contribution that music makes to the overall narrative of a multimodal event or presentation is also acknowledged in the context of film scholarship. For instance, James Buhler states “music...modifies a film narrative by imparting a new quality or power to the representation.”¹⁶¹ In my analyses, then, I am particularly interested in how the chosen music may alter or change the meaning of a scene.

The relationship between media within multimodality can affirm or confuse the types of narrative that are being communicated in the multimodal event. Media scholars Nicholas Cook and Andrew Goodwin both discuss the relationship between these modes within the context of popular music studies. Cook suggests the terms “conformance, complementation, and contest” to explain the relationship of the media, while Goodwin uses the terms “illustration, amplification and disjuncture.”¹⁶² Each of these sets of terms explains how the distinct media contribute to the effect of the whole. I will follow Goodwin’s terms, since I find that these offer a clearer interpretation. Illustration describes a relationship between modes wherein the narratives or

¹⁶⁰ Gunther R. Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen, *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Lori Burns, “Multimodal Analysis of Popular Music Video: Genre, Discourse, and Narrative in Steven Wilson’s ‘Drive Home,’” in *Coming of Age: Teaching and Learning Popular Music in Academia*, ed. Carlos Xavier Rodriguez (MI: University of Michigan Press, 2017); David Machin, *Analysing Popular Music: Image, Sound and Text* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2010).

¹⁶¹ James Buhler, *Theories of the Soundtrack*, The Oxford Music/Media Series (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 125. Buhler is here summarizing the work of Noël Carroll, *Theorizing the Moving Image*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁶² Nicholas Cook, *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1998); Andrew Goodwin, *Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 86–88.

messages they communicate are aligned. Amplification describes a relationship where the message is further enhanced by the other modes, while disjuncture describes a relationship between modes that results in confusion or disagreement. There is a fascinating parallel here between the relationship of distinct media within a multimodal system, and the relationship that cultural artifacts have to a system of power. The terms Cook and Goodwin use reflect the terms Lawrence Grossberg and other cultural studies scholars employ to describe the role of cultural artifacts in response to power, that is, “reproduce/struggle against/transform.”¹⁶³ In this sense then, moments of disjuncture between media may lead us to discover moments of disjuncture between the positive narratives of multiculturalism in Canada and the everyday experiences of life within the Canadian context. I develop this thought further in the analytic framework I present in the second chapter of this dissertation.

Multimodal/Semiotic Parameters

As my methodology establishes, within this analysis, I am particularly interested in the musics, visuals, and texts that are used within the cultural portion (1:31:14–2:18:48) of the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Games. My case studies center on the first three scenes of the cultural portion (1:31:48–2:01:01).¹⁶⁴ In reference to the music, I pay attention to both newly composed and pre-existing music, as well as the instrumentation choices. The visual elements I include within the scope of my analysis include the actors, dancers, and musicians (including elements of choreography or their positioning on stage and screen, and their costumes), and the other artistic visual elements that are used—especially the art that is projected onto the banners as the backdrop for the scenes. With regard to texts, my analysis primarily

¹⁶³ Grossberg, *Cultural Studies*, 8.

¹⁶⁴ “Complete Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony – Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics”
<https://youtu.be/MxZpUueDAvc>.

engages with what I refer to as the “in-ceremony” texts—since the cultural portion featured several narrations of quotes from famous Canadians or poetry excerpts. To enrich the analysis, I also include the explanatory texts from the Media Guide—a document that was provided to media/broadcast companies to give explanatory information regarding the content of the Opening Ceremony. I accessed this document through the Vancouver City Archive which holds the fonds of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. Occasionally I also refer to other documents from the archives, and public or critical reception of the ceremony itself.

Chapter Outline

The first chapter provides an overview of some of the basic historical, theoretical, and musical contexts for my analyses, following, as Larry Grossberg asserted, the call to be “radically contextual.”¹⁶⁵ In this chapter, I briefly introduce Indigenous/settler relations by summarizing some of the main points of historical and political development as settlers invaded Turtle Island and took possession of land, culture, and resources as they moved towards founding the Canadian state. I also highlight some of the main political policies and interventions that have governed settler/Indigenous relations in Canada—from the Indian Act, to the Multiculturalism Policy, and the more recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I ground my interpretations of Canadian nationalism within the pattern of civic nationalism, which views national identity as being constructed and maintained by the state, rather than developing organically from shared cultural or ethnic heritage. Understanding Canadian nationalism in this way enables a stronger connection to be made between the processes of nationalism and the processes and ideologies of settler colonialism. In the second section of this chapter, I provide foundational context for my analyses by exploring the settler colonial identities and ideologies that contribute to Canada’s

¹⁶⁵ Lawrence Grossberg, *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), cited in Gilbert B. Rodman, *Why Cultural Studies?* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2014), 54.

national identity formation, drawing on the work of a number of scholars to pinpoint two primary characteristics which then form the bases of the critiques to come—the myth of the Peaceable Kingdom, and an emphasis on landscape—and show how both of these are related to the settler “mindset of extraction.”¹⁶⁶ These two characteristics of Canadian identity, alongside the ideological qualities of extraction and erasure, become the main avenues for analysis and critique in the following chapters. I close this chapter with a discussion of music’s service to nationalism from a historical musicological perspective. I argue that by examining the qualities of nationalist operas of previous generations, one can view the nationalist spectacle of the Olympic Opening Ceremony as serving the same purpose, and acting as “barometers of nationhood.”¹⁶⁷ I also provide evidence from the statements of nationalist composers within the western classical tradition of what I term “universalizing discourse,” as a means of providing a further point of connection between nationalism and colonialism, and opening up a space for future investigations into the impact of colonialism and its counterpart/parent white supremacy within music.

The second chapter contains an amalgamated analytic and theoretical framework which I have developed in order to bridge the methodology and theoretical positioning that I am using in this dissertation and provide a resource for future studies of this nature. Building from Walter Mignolo’s concept that decolonial investigations must address not only the content of engagement but the terms of that engagement, I apply his work to the multimodal context and reflect on how analysing and critiquing the seen narrative can reveal the unseen ideology and thus make contributions to efforts of decoloniality. I further connect this to Glen Coulthard’s

¹⁶⁶ Simpson and Klein, “Dancing the World into Being.”

¹⁶⁷ Ingraham, “Assimilation, Integration and Individuation,” 212.

critique of the politics of recognition—which speaks to the need for Indigenous sovereignty to be self-asserted, rather than merely government initiated and recognized. I see Mignolo’s concept of content vs terms as an abstract echo of what Coulthard warns about—that the politics of recognition (a change that is reflected in content only) is not real decolonization because it leaves the power in the hands of the colonizers (the terms of engagement stay the same). Aligning Dylan Robinson’s evaluations of “inclusionary music” with these concepts and with the sequential and deepening analysis articulated by a multimodal methodology, provides, I argue, a thought-provoking and fruitful tool for engaging with cultural productions, and perhaps even for creating future collaborations that move us towards a decolonial future. In each of the three following chapters, I put this analytic and theoretical framework to use in a close reading of the words, music, and visual elements of selected scenes from the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. Although my use of the framework is not always explicit, its organizing principles inform the way I engage with the material—looking at what is immediately obvious in each of the modes, questioning what the interaction of the modes communicates, and finally, contemplating what these surface level presentations and representations reveal about the undergirding principles at work within constructions of Canada’s national identity. In the second half of the second chapter, building from the work of bell hooks, Daniel Chua and others, I position self-giving love as a strategy which opposes the extractive nature of colonialism. As I argue there, looking and listening from a position of love rejects the settler colonial positionality which is built from hunger and enables us to see and hear and engage with our Indigenous hosts in ways that value their cultures and concerns as preferential to our own.

Chapters Three, Four, and Five serve as the main analytic portion of the dissertation, each a case study of one scene from the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony. Of the six scenes

in the cultural portion, these are the most content-rich, featuring numerous performers, a variety of music, art, visual spectacle, and texts. In addition to drawing on Dylan Robinson's request that attention be paid to landscape and multicultural-based tropes (mentioned above), the successive development of the case studies of these three chapters reflects what Mary Ingraham has noticed about the evolution of Canadian culture and treatment of Indigenous people in Canadian opera, there is a movement from cultural assimilation, to integration, to parallelism and individuation. In summarizing how both Indigenous presence and the presence of minoritized others are treated in these three scenes, I observe a similar trajectory. In the first scene, the audience sees and hears only the echo of Indigenous presence, and non-settler, non-Indigenous presence, and that presence, I argue, is relegated to a mythologized past. In the second scene, Indigenous creativity is more fully acknowledged in both visuals and texts, but it is appropriated or erased as the settler nation is centered. Finally, in the third scene, Indigenous people, and characters representing the "multicultural other," are physically present and shown as active participants, however, they are decentered as the "Canadian" takes precedence. The trajectory these scenes represent, therefore, acts as a reflection of the development of Indigenous/settler relations across Canadian history, from erasure to assimilation, to inclusion as part of the multicultural fabric, albeit a limited and managed inclusion. These scenes are thus ripe for a decolonial critique.

Additionally, each of the three chapters bears its own unique overarching quality that reflects settler colonial goals. In Chapter Three, I frame the settler colonial activity as one of "spectralizing" (borrowing from Baloy's use of the term). Spectralizing, I argue, is the act of relegating to the mythological past, rendering Indigenous peoples as only ghosts. In Chapter Four, I argue that the settler colonial nation makes an appeal to national identity through demonstrating aptitude in the stereotypical "fine" arts—painting, ballet, and poetry (drawing

from other Olympic analyses and Paul Litt's analysis of Canadian culture). Finally, in Chapter Five, I show that the settler colonial mindset of extraction is evident in how multiculturalism is treated as a resource that is claimed (stolen/appropriated) for the purpose of establishing the identity of the overarching culture (ideas established first by Leanne Simpson and Eva Mackey). In addition to these guiding characteristics, in each chapter I pursue an in-depth multimodal analysis, informed by the anti-colonial framework of this study.

In the third chapter, I begin my first of three case studies each featuring a scene from the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. In this scene, entitled "Hymn to the North," the organizers present a vision of Canada's North, and of the interactions of the diverse people groups who have come to call Canada home. The use of multiculturalism and landscape-based tropes in the construction of Canadian identity are immediately obvious, but my interest here is specifically in how they are performed through words, music, and text, and how they are treated in ways that echo the settler colonial aims of extraction and erasure.

Chapter Four addresses the second scene of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, which is entitled "Sacred Grove." In this chapter, I argue that the individual narratives communicated by the semiotic modes erase Indigenous presence and creativity, center Eurocentric ideals about landscape and the arts, and overall contribute to a national identity that is formulated around settler values. Drawing from the work of Paul Litt and others, I position this scene as an example of the settler "displaced culture dilemma" which refers to how settler identity is a conflation of what is appropriated from Indigenous contexts, and what is drawn from the imperial heritage. The scene "Sacred Grove" does not refer to multiculturalism and diversity explicitly, but instead, features the landscape as the means of transcendence.

The scene “Rhythms of the Fall,” which forms the basis for the analysis in the fifth chapter of this dissertation, is the scene where the story is centered around music and multiculturalism. The landscape is no longer the primary feature of the spectacle, and instead it is the fiddling cultures that have developed across Canada. In this chapter, I argue that the extractive nature of settler colonialism is evident in how the musics and cultures of the various fiddling traditions that are featured in this scene are treated. I further argue, following Eva Mackey, and many other critics of multiculturalism, that the management of diversity performed here actually serves to center whiteness and reinforce the settler colonial status quo.

The final chapter offers a brief conclusion of the dissertation with a summary of the data, a reflection on how this work has changed me, and further implications of this work for academic studies and for Canada more generally. I also point to the Opening Ceremony of the Toronto 2015 PanAm Games as a type of ceremony which promotes a possibly anti-colonial framing of gathering as nations.

Van10 Process

Before moving on to the main content of the dissertation, a brief introduction to the organizing process for the Vancouver Olympic event will help to situate and explain the choices that were made. The successful bid to host the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver was made in 2003, and Vancouver beat out other cities Pyeongchang and Salzburg. Irish-born John Furlong was the President and CEO of the Vancouver Olympic Organizing Committee. Furlong notes his previous experience with the Northern BC Winter Games and the Canada Games in his autobiography, and memoir of the games.¹⁶⁸ Missing from Furlong’s memoir, according to journalist Laura Robinson, is mention of his role as teacher at a Catholic-run day school for

¹⁶⁸ John A. Furlong, *Patriot Hearts: Inside the Olympics That Changed a Country* (New York: Douglas & McIntyre, 2011), 21, 26.

Indigenous students in Northern BC.¹⁶⁹ Later, several Indigenous people who had been students at the school came forward with abuse allegations, but these did not result in charges after an investigation by the RCMP. In June 2020, several members of the Lake Babine Nation filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, and investigations are ongoing.¹⁷⁰ Furlong denies the allegations.¹⁷¹ Whether or not Furlong had direct impact on the artistic choices made in the parts of the Opening Ceremony under discussion here, it is important to acknowledge these allegations, and they show how Canada's present is still fraught with efforts to uncover the truth about Canada's past and working to make it right.

The artistic directors for the event were David Atkins and Ignatius Jones, two Australian men who had been praised for their recent success in the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games. They were joined by Associate artistic director Steve Boyd (an American based in the United Kingdom), whose credits include the last 16 Olympic Games, and another Australian associate director, Drew Anthony.¹⁷² In these high authoritative positions, there were no Canadians present except for Douglas Paraschuk, who served as the director of design. Indigenous input on the ceremony was limited. John Powell, also known by his traditional name Winidi, is Mamalilikulla of the Kwak'wak'wakw, and is credited as part of the Opening Ceremony creative team.¹⁷³ Winidi served as "Design Coordinator for the Vancouver 2010 Welcome Portion of the

¹⁶⁹ Laura Robinson, "The Vancouver Olympics and John Furlong's Sins of Omission," *Play the Game*, April 13, 2011, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.playthegame.org/news/the-vancouver-olympics-and-john-furlong-s-sins-of-omission/>

¹⁷⁰ Eva Uguen-Csenge, "Indigenous former students say RCMP response to complaint about John Furlong investigations insufficient," *CBC News*, Oct 9, 2020. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/john-furlong-rcmp-investigation-human-rights-1.5758220>

¹⁷¹ Eva Uguen-Csenge, "Indigenous former students."

¹⁷² "Professional Bio" Steve Boyd Portfolio, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.steveboydportfolio.com/bio>

¹⁷³ Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony Official Program, 29, Box: 822-G-01 fld 02 Reference Code: AM1550-S03, Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) fonds City of Vancouver Archive; "John Powell – Artist Bio" Potlatch6767, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://potlatch6767.com/artists/john-powell/>;

Olympics.”¹⁷⁴ This clarification from Winidi’s personal biography is important, in contrast to the Opening Ceremony Program which refers to Powell as “Senior designer and Indigenous Consultant.”¹⁷⁵ Winidi’s artist biography from two arts websites demonstrates that his participation was limited to the Indigenous welcome portion. Whether his position as Indigenous consultant continued for the remainder of the ceremony, and in particular, the cultural portion, is unclear from these sources.

Alberta-born musician Dave Pierce was the director of music for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, which earned him the 2010 Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Direction. Donovan Seidle, a violinist who also plays for the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, was associate director of music. Two Indigenous musicians are credited in the Media Guide—Sandy Scofield (Métis Composer of Aboriginal Welcome Music) and Ray G Thunderchild (from Thunderchild First Nation, composed “Sam’s Song” which was used in the parade of athletes).¹⁷⁶

According to Furlong, and my archival research, cultural symposiums were held years before the event in order to consult a wide variety of Canadian artists for their input on shaping the ceremony. An additional list of the members of the Organizing Committee and individuals involved in the artistic portion of the ceremony is included in Appendix 1.

Indigenous Participation and Opposition to the Games

Although the narrative I present throughout the forthcoming chapters highlights settler colonial logics of elimination and extraction, and the erasure of Indigenous presence during the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, Indigenous participation during the organizing and hosting of the Games as a whole was actually groundbreaking. As early as 1998, when the

¹⁷⁴ “John Powell – Artist Bio.”

¹⁷⁵ Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony Official Program, 29.

¹⁷⁶ Media Guide, 44.

Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation was in the process of putting their domestic Olympic bid together, Squamish and Lil'wat leaders initiated contact with the Bid Corporation in order to offer support and negotiate terms of engagement.¹⁷⁷ During the remainder of the bid process, these First Nations groups continued advocating for partnership, and for recompense comparable to what other parties involved were receiving—for instance, Whistler received a “hosting benefit package (including 300 acres of land).”¹⁷⁸ After negotiations also involving the Provincial government, the Squamish and Lil'wat nations were “assured government support for a new cultural centre, development funds and 300 acres of land.”¹⁷⁹ Later, the Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations also agreed to support the Games and negotiate their own participation. The relationship between VANOC and the Four Host First Nations was made official in 2004.¹⁸⁰

The Olympic Charter has extremely scant directions for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies and does not refer to Indigenous Peoples at all. The protocols within the Charter forbid speeches by anyone other than the IOC President, and the President of the Organizing Committee. The Head of State of the Host Nation may not give a speech and can only declare the games open.¹⁸¹ Thus, the Olympic Charter itself limits Indigenous participation in the Games. An additional document, known as the *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21: Sport for Sustainable Development*, acknowledges Indigenous populations and their role in environmental

¹⁷⁷ Catharine Hilary Dunn, “Aboriginal Partnerships for Sustainable 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games: A Framework for Cooperation” (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, 2007), 75ff.

¹⁷⁸ Jennifer J. Silver, Zoë A. Meletis, and Priya Vadi, “Complex Context: Aboriginal Participation in Hosting the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games,” *Leisure Studies* 31, no. 3 (July 1, 2012): 291–308, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2011.645248>, 297.

¹⁷⁹ Silver et al “Complex Context,” 297.

¹⁸⁰ Christine O'Bonsawin, “A Coast Salish Olympic Welcome: The 2010 Vancouver Opening Ceremony and the Politics of Indigenous Participation,” *Proceedings: International Symposium for Olympic Research*, (2010), 261. Much more extensive details about the involvement of the First Nations in the Bid Process and early organizing of the Games are available in Dunn, 2007.

¹⁸¹ International Olympic Committee, *Olympic Charter*, (Lausanne, Switzerland: Author, 2001), 99.

sustainability, and advocates to further their recognition.¹⁸² Christine O’Bonsawin explains however, that “while this is an official Olympic document, approved and sanctioned by the IOC, it remains non-binding and merely serves as an invitational guide for members of the Olympic family.”¹⁸³ Despite these limitations on participation, and seemingly optional guidelines for Indigenous inclusion, O’Bonsawin agrees that the Vancouver 2010 Games was “a progressive model for Indigenous participation” although she attributes this to multiple “political and external pressures,” including local First Nations and government relations, which were strained at the time due to negotiations of treaty developments.¹⁸⁴

In addition to the organizational relationships mentioned above, the Four Host First Nations were featured within the Opening Ceremony itself. O’Bonsawin notes that “for the first time in Olympic history, Indigenous peoples were formally recognized members of the Official Party” when the FHFN Chiefs were included along with other national dignitaries and IOC members in the President’s Box.¹⁸⁵ Later in the ceremony (17:26-26:07), representatives from each of the Four Host First Nations offered an official welcome. Four representatives from each of the Four Host First Nations stood in the middle of the stage, welcoming the nations to the Indigenous territories in their tribal languages as well as in French and English. This FHFN Welcome portion of the Opening Ceremony also included Indigenous youth, dancers, and performers from across Canada. Participants described it as educational and empowering, and felt that they formed life-long connections through the event.¹⁸⁶ Rebekah Wilson, one of the Métis youth dancers who was invited to be part of the event described her experience in a daily

¹⁸² O’Bonsawin, “A Coast Salish Olympic Welcome,” 260.

¹⁸³ O’Bonsawin, “A Coast Salish Olympic Welcome,” 260.

¹⁸⁴ O’Bonsawin, “A Coast Salish Olympic Welcome,” 256.

¹⁸⁵ O’Bonsawin, “A Coast Salish Olympic Welcome,” 256.

¹⁸⁶ ITBC, “Celebrating Indigenous Cultures and the 10th Anniversary of Vancouver 2010 Olympics” Indigenous Tourism BC, February 12, 2020, <https://www.indigenoussc.com/stories/celebrating-indigenous-culture-and-the-10th-anniversary-of-vancouver-2010-olympics/>.

journal which has since been shared by the Métis Nation of Ontario. In one entry, Wilson shares her excitement: “We’re sharing our culture with the entire world. Nothing like this has ever happened before. I’m going to be part of history in a big way!”¹⁸⁷

In spite of these positive inclusions and perspectives, Indigenous responses to the Games and to Indigenous participation in the event were decidedly non-homogeneous. Some felt it was a distraction from real issues while others celebrated the inclusion and participation. There was also a difference between comments and perspectives made on the Games at the time, and comments made retrospectively. For example, before the Games started, Grand Chief Stewart Philip—president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs said, “I don’t think it’s proper for me to stand there and hold hands with government officials and be part of the misrepresentation of the well-being of our people.”¹⁸⁸ A decade later however, Philip’s position had softened somewhat and he stated: “I don’t think there’s any question that the 2010 Olympics showcased the diversity, beauty and strength of Indigenous culture here in B.C.”¹⁸⁹

Other Indigenous perspectives on the event were similarly positive and enthusiastic. Within the Official Program of the Opening Ceremony, Tewanee Joseph, the CEO of the Four Host First Nations, stated that the two organizations (VANOC and FHFN) “have achieved our joint goal of unprecedented Aboriginal participation in the 2010 Winter Games. The role Indigenous peoples are playing in the Opening Ceremony is just one extraordinary example of

¹⁸⁷ Rebekah Wilson, “2010 Olympic Indigenous Youth Gathering – a Historic Coming Together of Canada’s First People,” Métis Nation of Ontario, February 4, 2010, <https://www.metisnation.org/news/2010-olympic-indigenous-youth-gathering-a-historic-coming-together-of-canada-s-first-people/>.

¹⁸⁸ Martin Kaste, “Olympics Met with Mixed Emotions by First Nations,” NPR, February 12, 2010, <https://www.npr.org/2010/02/12/123603649/olympics-met-with-mixed-emotions-by-first-nations>.

¹⁸⁹ Maryse Zeidler, “10 years later, Indigenous tourism still reaps the benefits of the 2010 Olympics,” CBC, February 22, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/vancouver-olympics-indigenous-tourism-1.5471686>.

this.”¹⁹⁰ Joseph went on to describe the Opening Ceremony as the “world’s biggest Potlatch.”¹⁹¹

The Indigenous Tourism Board of British Columbia stated that the event “acknowledged Indigenous cultures in a way that moved beyond performance and into improved, more equal, and meaningful partnerships between VANOC, the Province of BC, and the host Nations.”¹⁹²

Whonoak, Dennis Thomas, of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, affirmed that the Games “brought us all together on a world stage to give a pure representation of the local Indigenous Nations,” and explained that the partnerships that began at the Games have “helped spark” continued “dialogue and conversation.”¹⁹³

Despite working within the limitations of the Olympic event, Indigenous agency was also expressed in how the First Nations Welcome was put together. Sandy Scofield, the Métis composer who worked on the music for this portion explained, “much prayer and personal ceremony preceded the creation of this song, in which guidance was sought from the ancestors and the Creator to make a song of good medicine – one which would showcase our First Peoples in the most respectful and honourable light, as we welcome you to what has been our home from time immemorial.”¹⁹⁴ Natalie Baloy, a settler scholar, summarizes Indigenous participation at the Games in this way: “Indigenous artists and performers leveraged Indigenous inclusion in the Games to refuse conditions that spectacularize Indigeneity for the consumptive appetite of settler-spectators.”¹⁹⁵

Indeed, not all Indigenous responses to the Vancouver Games were as positive as the quotations included above might suggest. As at the Calgary Games in 1988, Indigenous peoples

¹⁹⁰ Official Program, 4.

¹⁹¹ Official Program, 4.

¹⁹² ITBC, “Celebrating Indigenous Cultures.”

¹⁹³ ITBC, “Celebrating Indigenous Cultures.”

¹⁹⁴ Sandy Scofield, Media Guide, 20.

¹⁹⁵ Natalie J. K. Baloy, “Our Home(s) and/on Native Land: Spectacular Re-Visions and Refusals at Vancouver’s 2010 Winter Olympic Games,” *Streetnotes* 25 (2016), 197.

used the international spotlight to highlight some of the injustices they face within the settler colonizing context in Canada. As the Vancouver Games were developing, there was an Olympic Resistance Network which coined the phrase “No Olympics on Stolen Native Land.” This network highlighted the fact that these Olympics would be held on unceded Indigenous territories, and that the presence of the event would negatively impact treaty processes, drawing attention away from the day to day injustices and harms being faced by the local Indigenous groups.¹⁹⁶ Abenaki scholar Christine O’Bonsawin concludes, “a serious flaw exists within the current Olympic structure, particularly the bid process, which continues to play a part in the ongoing marginalization and exploitation of indigenous peoples.”¹⁹⁷ She also suggests that the IOC change its procedures and policies for evaluating city bids, and work towards honoring Indigenous beliefs and “just treatment” of Indigenous peoples.¹⁹⁸ There were also significant protests during the relay of the Olympic Flame. In its journey across Canada, the Olympic Torch visited over 100 Indigenous communities. However, as O’Bonsawin summarizes elsewhere, both the Olympics and the torch relay were seen as a distraction from bigger issues facing Indigenous communities, and the events were used as an opportunity by the communities and by ally protestors to highlight those issues—primarily regarding treaties and land claims.¹⁹⁹

Janice Forsyth, like Christine O’Bonsawin, affirms that the support of the local Indigenous people was essential in winning the Olympic bid. Forsyth quotes Jack Poole, Chairman of the Board for the Vancouver 2010 Organizing Committee, who stated that “If it hadn’t been for the full support of the Four Host First Nations in our bid... we likely wouldn’t be talking about

¹⁹⁶ Christine M. O’Bonsawin, “‘No Olympics on Stolen Native Land’: Contesting Olympic Narratives and Asserting Indigenous Rights within the Discourse of the 2010 Vancouver Games,” *Sport in Society* 13, no. 1 (2010): 149, 151.

¹⁹⁷ O’Bonsawin, “No Olympics,” 154.

¹⁹⁸ O’Bonsawin, “No Olympics,” 153.

¹⁹⁹ Christine O’Bonsawin, “Igniting a Resistance Movement: Understanding Indigenous Opposition to the 2010 Olympic Torch Relay,” in *Critical Dialogues on the Olympic and Paralympic Games*, ed. Janice Forsyth and Michael Heine (International Centre for Olympic Studies, 2012) 99.

Vancouver 2010 today.”²⁰⁰ Despite this support and participation, Forsyth explains that the process of consulting and partnering with the local Indigenous groups was far from perfect. As mentioned above, it was actually the Squamish and the Lil’wat leaders who initiated contact with the Bid Corporation in order “to voice their interest in being involved in the seminal states of the bid phase—not the other way around.”²⁰¹ The Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh were only invited later, and, their position was viewed as non-essential, as no new sites would be built on their land.²⁰² Forsyth continues, “each was given a different contract, with more or fewer benefits based on their commercial value to the host society.”²⁰³ Robyn Bourgeois, writing before the Games took place, affirmed that “VANOC’s perceived benevolence towards First Nations is transformed into acts of vested self-interest and self-preservation: these land use agreements are not a commitment to social justice in regards to First Nations territorial sovereignty, but nothing more or less than insurance that First Nations communities will not disrupt VANOC’s Olympic plans.”²⁰⁴ Forsyth’s conclusion is practically the same, “these partnerships would not be all that bad except that what is valued is usually based on the degree to which it serves corporate interests.”²⁰⁵ The perceived progressive collaboration between the Indigenous hosts and the Vancouver Organizing Committee are thus contradicted by the self-serving interest of the latter group, as these three Indigenous authors highlight. Such contradictions serve as compelling background context for the analysis of the cultural portion of the ceremony which I pursue in this dissertation. Despite these contradictions however, it is crucial to recognize the significant

²⁰⁰ Jack Poole, cited in Forsyth, “Illusion of Inclusion,” 23.

²⁰¹ Forsyth, “Illusion,” 25

²⁰² Forsyth, “Illusion,” 26.

²⁰³ Forsyth, “Illusion,” 25.

²⁰⁴ Bourgeois, “Deceptive Inclusion,” 42.

²⁰⁵ Forsyth, “Illusion,” 28.

presence and agency of the local Indigenous peoples and their participation in the organization of the event and the early portions of the Opening Ceremony.

Conclusion to Introductory Chapter

With close attention to detail, my work in this dissertation aims to reveal and critique the settler colonial patterns of elimination and extraction that are present in the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics Games. Informed by Robinson's warning about the problematic nature of landscape and multicultural-based tropes, I discuss how settler colonial mindsets inform the use of these tropes, and how the artistic choices made in this Opening Ceremony thus serve to reinforce settler colonialism as the dominant narrative in Canadian national identity construction.

Chapter One – Canada, Settler Colonialism, and Music

This chapter will provide foundational material for the forthcoming analyses by giving an overview of various conceptions of nationalism, as well as the relationship between nationalism and settler colonialism, and nationalism and music. In the first section, after giving a brief cultural and political history of Canada’s development as a nation, I situate Canadian nationalism in relationship to broader theories of nationalism in order to understand some of the concepts that make Canadian nationalism distinctive. Framing Canada within the context of civic nationalism as a state-nation (wherein national identity is built by the state), I emphasize the continuing process of identity construction, understanding flexibility rather than fixity. Following the work of other scholars who acknowledge this flexibility, this perspective enables me to see Canadian identity as an identity-in-process, shaped by competing narratives and negotiations, and requiring the adhesion of numerous symbols of nationhood through which identity is performed.¹

In the second section of the chapter, I summarise the relationship between settler colonialism and nationalism in Canada. I follow the work of Paul Litt, Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J Barker, and others who assert that nationalism and settler colonialism are almost synonymous within the Canadian nation building process. In understanding settler colonialism and nationalism as ongoing processes requiring the management of stories and symbols, I summarise a collection of national narratives and symbols which scholars identify as definitive of the settler Canadian identity. There are two primary identity factors which Lowman and Barker summarise (and which many other scholars refer to); these are the peacemaking myth and

¹ For instance, see Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (London ; New York: Routledge, 1999), 9. Also, Imre Szeman, and Andrew Pendakis, “Cultural Studies in Canada: Past, Present, and Future”, in Cynthia Sugars (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature* (2016; online edn, Oxford Academic, 10 Dec. 2015), <https://doi-org.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199941865.013.7>, accessed 19 Dec. 2023.

a reliance on the beauty or uniqueness of the landscape and nature. I expand these two main points with further subpoints identifying a total of five characteristic elements which are repeated symbols of Canadian nationhood and which each serve to further the goals of settler colonialism—the peacemaker myth in three subpoints: Canada’s “peaceful” relationship with Indigenous peoples, Canada’s peacemaking role in the world, Canada’s peaceable relationship with internal diversity, and the magnificent landscape generally, and as “North” in particular. In highlighting these 5 characteristics, I am also paving the way to identify and recognize them in the successive analytic chapters, where their presence in the examples from the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony demonstrates the continuing influence of settler colonialism in spectacles of national identity. In this section I also draw connections between scholarship on nationalist operas and Olympic spectacles, in order to enrich the interdisciplinary dialogue, and claim that the nationalist goals of these two types of events are broadcast using a similar set of techniques.

In the final portion of this chapter, I observe a set of similar qualities between colonial power and musical nationalism, highlighted particularly by the desire for universality, and the management and control of difference. With reference to three distinct places and time periods, I note how Western composers have claimed superiority and aimed at universality by attempting to be the most successful in blending “other” styles. I argue that this tendency echoes Canada’s attempts to manage and control difference through official multiculturalism, and further echoes the settler colonial mindset of extracting resources for the purpose of curating or creating the overarching identity. Noted nationalist composers including Joseph Quantz, Mikhail Glinka, and Horatio Parker each spoke of this process of blending and managing other styles as a means of claiming the superiority of their nationalist goals. By mentioning these composers and their

nationalist/universalist goals here, I situate my work within historical musicology and as a response to Walter D. Mignolo's decolonial investigations which argue that the last 500 years of history have been grievously shaped by the promotion of Western universality.²

Canadian History, Indigenous-Settler Relations, and Theories of Nationalism

Before introducing the theoretical context for this work and commencing the analyses, I provide here a very brief overview of how Canada came to be. This brief summary of Canada's history recounts some significant moments in the cultural and political development of the nation, in order that the reader may be prepared for the forthcoming discussion of settler colonialism and the analysis of the content of the Vancouver Olympic Games. This is particularly important as I set to out to address certain ways in which the story that is told through the Opening Ceremony vastly differs from the complicated and contested history of the nation that has been built on Indigenous land.

The Conflict Begins

200 years ago, the nation now known as Canada did not exist. Arguably, even 50 years ago, Canada as we know it today did not exist. Through an ongoing sequence of political and cultural events, Canada is still growing and being shaped into a particular kind of nation, a nation whose defining identity relies on state-based intervention, and the management of differing perspectives—including those of First Nations, English, French, and now, numerous other heritages. In addition (or perhaps, opposition) to the dominant Anglophone heritage, Jody Berland explains, “aboriginal peoples and Quebec sovereigntists see control over culture as a necessary means of their own empowerment.”³ Some see Canada as a peaceful multicultural

² Walter D. Mignolo, *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations*, On Decoloniality (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), x.

³ Jody Berland, “Marginal Notes on Cultural Studies in Canada,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (1995): 519, <https://doi.org/10.3138/utq.64.4.514>, 3.

nation, while others recognize the oppressive, settler-colonial characteristics that undergird this peaceful multiculturalism. In order to understand these differing views, we must understand the particular subset of circumstances and eclectic gathering of communities that have contributed to the development of Canada as a nation. From Indigenous sovereignty, to invasion, to British and French colonialism, to confederation and independence, there have been many significant and controversial steps in the political construction of this nation. In parallel to the political construction of Canada, Canadian national identity also undergoes a cultural construction—wherein the state, and other nationally significant authorities attempt to unite the citizens into a (mostly) homogenous group, bound together by an admiration of shared symbols rather than by shared ethnic and historic roots. While I am not particularly interested in the specific details of the political process that led to its birth, it is against that backdrop that an attempt to develop a sense of cohesive national identity is constructed and maintained. To understand the objectives and outcomes of the rehearsal of Canadian cultural performance and the symbols with which this identity has come to be expressed, this political and historical context is required.

Canada's political and cultural identity has been shaped by significant relationships with other peoples and nations. In this section, I summarise these relationships throughout Canada's history in 4 distinct sections—relationship to Indigenous peoples, relationship to France, relationship to Britain and relationship to the USA. Summarizing Canada's history through these relationships provides a grounding for the presence or absence of these relationships in the future attempted formations of a unique Canadian identity—in other words, as Canada developed, relationships with these other powers changed and became important factors in defining the nation. As Paul Litt explains, settler colonial cultures in particular suffer from what he calls “displaced culture” that is, they neither belong properly to the Indigenous people and place they

occupy, nor do they belong properly to the empire from which they came.⁴ Thus, a succession of trends in Canadian identity formation have involved the goal of indigenizing, separating from the British, separating from the United States, and more recently, reshaping the relationship with Indigenous peoples through the process of decolonizing.⁵

Throughout Canadian history, there have been several significant political steps in this ongoing process—after separation from the colonial powers (England/France), Canadian identity required greater distinction from the United States. In more recent years, Canadian national identity has been one which attempts to reconcile the multiplicity of ethnic identities present, under one unifying banner—that of multiculturalism, and finally, in contemporary Canadian society, there has been a turn towards Truth and Reconciliation. Throughout each of these eras, one of the key factors in this process has been Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples, or more properly, settler relationship with Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island.

Indigenous Life on Turtle Island

The challenge of approaching this section of the dissertation is that numerous works on Canadian history approach writing about that history in ways that reinforce the narratives of erasure and come from settler colonial perspectives on history, for instance overlooking the elements of conflict or limiting the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples through how the story of Canadian history is told. At times they are also guilty of appropriating, at times even explicitly, Indigenous identity and perspectives for the purpose of explaining Canadian history. For instance, the author of one history text states: “The Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Coast possess the ideal symbol for Canadian history, one that I want to appropriate as a metaphor.”⁶ To

⁴ Paul Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory and Canadian Cultural Nationalism,” *Settler Colonial Studies*, May 30, 2023, 1.

⁵ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 6, 9, 12.

⁶ H. V. Nelles, *A Little History of Canada*, Third edition, (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2017), vii.

take a decolonial perspective, as I am aiming to do throughout this dissertation, thus means that I must also be attentive to the ways in which this story (or, perhaps more accurately, stories) are told. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains, “academic writing is a form of selecting, arranging and presenting knowledge. It privileges sets of texts, views about the history of an idea, what issues count as significant;”⁷ Bearing that in mind, in this section I attempt to write in a way that also presences Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty and perspectives. My intention is not to provide in-depth analysis or critique here, but simply to provide a backdrop for the presentation of Canadian identity that I investigate in the forthcoming chapters.

While anthropologists estimate that Indigenous ancestors arrived on Turtle Island from Asia via the Beringia Land Bridge about 12,000 years ago, most First Nations groups affirm that they have lived on and cared for this land since time immemorial after having received it from Creator.⁸ Framing their presence on the land as one shaped by caretaking and interconnectedness, rather than as one of ownership implies a relationship with all of creation that entails wholeness, humility, and care.⁹ It is estimated that just before settler arrival began, there were between 500,000 and 1–2 million people on Turtle Island.¹⁰ That number quickly diminished as settlers brought weapons, diseases, and increased endangerment to Indigenous life. Despite that fact, there are currently 53 “distinct Aboriginal languages” which are usually grouped in 11 language families still present on Turtle Island.¹¹ Some groups were sedentary,

⁷ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, (New York, Zed Books: 2021), 39.

⁸ Olive Patricia Dickason, William Newbigging, and Cary Miller, *Indigenous Peoples within Canada: A Concise History*, Fifth edition, (Don Mills, Ontario, Canada: Oxford University Press, 2023); John Belshaw, Sarah Nickel, and Chelsea Horton, *Histories of Indigenous Peoples and Canada*, accessed October 27, 2023, <https://histindigenouspeoples.pressbooks.tru.ca/>.

⁹ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 17.

¹⁰ Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel, *History of the Canadian Peoples. Volume 1, Beginnings to 1867*, 4th ed. (Toronto: Pearson Longman, 2006), 9.

¹¹ Alan D. McMillan and Eldon Yellowhorn, *First Peoples in Canada*, 3rd updated and rev. ed. (Vancouver, B.C: Douglas & McIntyre, 2004), 5.

while some were nomadic, many were matrilineal, and there were inter-tribal relationships of conflict, trade, and cooperation.¹² These statistics illustrate the diversity of Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island, and demonstrate that it is better not to summarise their history and identity in broad, sweeping statements. Instead, beyond the qualities just mentioned, for the purposes of the present study, it is sufficient to acknowledge the diversity and abundance of Indigenous life before settler contact that the numbers represent. More detailed and specific writing is becoming available as Indigenous writers reclaim their own story and the stories of their people, and write of the more specific practices, customs, and identities of each. James Frideres gives a brief summary of some of the Indigenous-authored history texts that have been published—including work by Anishinaabe writer Kahgegagahbowh (George Copway) as early as 1850.¹³ Robin Jarvis Brownlie similarly observes the presence of Indigenous authors and historians who published works in opposition to the settler colonial historical narratives that were (are) dominating the way Canadian history is told.¹⁴ In addition to the published works that Frideres and Brownlie mention, there are numerous works of Indigenous elders and storytellers revitalizing their own cultures—for example, consider Leanne Betasamosake’s work, *As We Have Always Done*.¹⁵ This work of resurgence, of course, is not always subjected to publication for the benefit of settler eyes both because of the value of oral tradition in many of these cultures, and as Robinson’s writing makes clear, sometimes (perhaps oftentimes) settlers do not need to be welcome in Indigenous space.¹⁶ In the rest of this dissertation, greater attention is paid to how settler

¹² James S. Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples in the Twenty-First Century*, Third edition., Themes in Canadian Sociology (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2020), 8.

¹³ James S. Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples*, ix–x.

¹⁴ Robin Jarvis Brownlie, “First Nations Perspectives and Historical Thinking in Canada,” in *First Nations, First Thoughts* (University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 21–22, <https://doi.org/10.59962/9780774815536-003>.

¹⁵ Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017).

¹⁶ Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 25.

colonialism impacted Indigenous life overall. For more specific details, readers are invited and encouraged to get to know their own Indigenous neighbors, learn more about the history of the groups whose land they live on, and read more thoroughly. This paragraph has provided only an impossibly brief overview in an attempt to indicate the richness and diversity of Indigenous peoples and their lives before the impact of settler colonialism decimated their cultures, as will become clear in the following paragraphs.

France Comes to Turtle Island

European interest in what is now called North America began in earnest around the year 1500. Although there was some European exploration of the Western Atlantic in the early 1500s and before (with journeys by the English, French, and Norse), it was in 1534 that Jacques Cartier on behalf of France initiated European exploration into what we now call Canada.¹⁷ Initially, he began a relationship with the local Iroquois and Mi'kmaq,¹⁸ who welcomed and traded with him, although that relationship eventually devolved into conflict after Cartier kidnapped Chief Donnakoh-Noh, his two sons, and other leaders, forcing them back to France, where they died.¹⁹ From Taignoagny and Domagaya, sons of Iroquois Chief Donnakoh-Noh, Cartier learned the word “Kanata” (which is where the name Canada comes from) which he thought referred to the region, but is actually just the word for “village” or “settlement.”²⁰ France traded with the Iroquois, and also took resources from the land, but didn't really succeed in setting up settlements during this time. It was Samuel de Champlain, fifty or so years later, who started

¹⁷ Roger Riendeau, *A Brief History of Canada*, 2nd ed, (New York: Facts on File, 2007), 24–26.

¹⁸ Here and throughout, I have strived to use the preferred names of the Indigenous peoples themselves, based on the chart provided in Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, xxvii-xxxiv.

¹⁹ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 82.

²⁰ Riendeau, *A Brief History of Canada*, 27. A footnote in Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller's book suggests that the term may actually have come from an Innu word “ka-na-dun” which means “clean land,” (Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 547, note 7)

further explorations and founded settlements in Quebec—which comes from the Algonquian word “kebec” which means “where the river narrows.”²¹

By Champlain’s time, the Iroquois were in conflict with the French, who then partnered with the Algonquians and Hurons against the Iroquois. European settlement at what the immigrants called New France grew because of investment from King Louis XIV during the mid-1600s. Champlain’s efforts resulted in trade agreements with the Omamiwinini, Innu, and Wendat.²² New France existed on Turtle Island situated geographically between the English settlements of the 13 colonies to the South, and the Hudson’s Bay Company to the North. Minor hostilities between the French and English continued throughout the early 18th century, until 1756 when greater conflict began, an enacting in colonial territories of the conflict that was occurring in the Seven Years War in England. Quebec was held under siege, and New France was defeated by the British at the battle on the Plains of Abraham in 1759. At the end of the Seven Years’ War, via the Treaty of Paris, New France was officially relinquished to the British, and became known as the Province of Quebec—operating under British rule.

The British take ownership of North America

Meanwhile, British settlement and exploration of the land we now call Canada developed in several different places. Early British interest was located around a fishing colony at what is now called Newfoundland. To the south, the 13 colonies were growing in strength, and to the north, the primary British in-road to the land was through the exploration and exploitation meted out by the Hudson’s Bay Company—which was actually started in 1670 by two Frenchmen who had decided to give their allegiance to the British.²³ The founding charter of the Hudson’s Bay

²¹ Riendeau, *A Brief History of Canada*, 37.

²² Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 89

²³ Riendeau, *A Brief History*, 64-65

Company granted them control of what was then known as Rupert's Land—a large swath of countryside that was approximately one third of the land now called Canada.²⁴ The HBC controlled trade in that region, mostly through trading furs with the Cree and Assiniboine people.²⁵ This mix of English and French settlements, spreading over Indigenous territory, with no overarching local authority remained the case until 1759, when New France was seceded to Britain, and the majority of settler-occupied Canada was operated under British control. When the British started to withdraw their imperial control over the united provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, those provinces and the other colonies such as Prince Edward Island, recognized that they needed to unite in order to stand up against possible invasion from the US.²⁶ The desire for unity was further fueled by the opportunity for railways to be constructed that would facilitate ease of trade between interior and coast, and thus access to international trade.²⁷ The confederation of the provinces into what was called the Dominion of Canada was initiated by the joining of 4 provinces (Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) in 1867, with other provinces and territories joining over the following decades.

The Persistent Threat of the Southern Neighbor—USA

The previous paragraphs have hinted at the impact that being the less-powerful Northern neighbor to the United States has had on the formation of the Canadian identity. In addition to increasing distinction from the US after the Seven Years War, and then the US war of Independence, Canada's identity and culture in more recent history has often been shaped by way of distinction from this southern neighbor. The evolution of nationalism in Canada in the

²⁴ Riendeau, *A Brief History*, 83. See also Andrew McIntosh and Shirlee Anne Smith, "Rupert's Land," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada, Article published February 07, 2006; Last Edited August 18, 2022.

²⁵ Riendeau, *A Brief History*, 83.

²⁶ Riendeau, *A Brief History*, 156.

²⁷ Riendeau, *A Brief History*, 169-170.

post-world war eras aimed to provide economic and cultural distinction from the United States. In response to concern that Canadian culture was too reliant on the media of our larger, southern neighbor, the government established what came to be known as “The Massey Commission” which was completed in 1951. Under Vincent Massey, the commission established that there was little to no support for Canadian culture and artists, and that the arts in Canada had previously been dependent on grants from wealthy US benefactors including Carnegie and Rockefeller. As a result of the commission, there was an increase in the establishment of funding agencies, grants, arts councils, and resource centers all aimed at working towards a national cultural identity.²⁸ Some of these included the Canada Council of the Arts in 1957—which developed the infamous “Canadian content quotas” and the Canadian Music Centre, also in 1957, which is responsible for keeping scores and recordings by Canadian composers.²⁹ Later in this chapter I will discuss how this need for distinction from the US has shaped the national identity markers, i.e. Canada as “North,” and how those serve to reinforce the settler colonial ideals.

Canadian Political Mediation of Settler/Indigenous Relations

Having given a brief overview of the initial British and French invasions into Turtle Island, this section summarizes the negative impacts that settler colonialism has had on Indigenous Life on Turtle Island specifically through the political policies that have shaped Canada’s history. Beyond the trade, conquest, and settlement briefly described in the preceding paragraphs, in some areas of Canada, settlers and Indigenous people made treaties. These treaties are still authoritative in many Indigenous-settler relations, and there are over 500 in existence.³⁰ Some,

²⁸ Berland, “Marginal Notes,” 1.

²⁹ For more on the impact of the Massey Commission on music in Canada, Jeremy Strachan, “Music, Communications, Place: Udo Kasemets and Experimentalism in 1960s Toronto” (PhD Diss., University of Toronto, 2015), 23–24.

³⁰ Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples*, 13.

particularly in Eastern parts of Turtle Island, were referred to as “friendship treaties,” while later, “numbered treaties” became more common and resulted in agreements that promised care to the First Nations, but allowed for increased settlement by the colonial groups.³¹ While at initial glance the concept of treaties may indicate peaceful relationships, the reality was that Indigenous people and settlers had very different views of what were the implications of such relationships, and that these treaties were often used by the federal government to deny the rights of Indigenous people.³² Dickason and co-authors explain that “Indigenous Peoples did not see treaties or other agreements as self-sustaining. To be kept alive, treaties needed to be fed every once in a while by ceremonial exchanges that demonstrated the continued commitment of each party to the agreement and to one another.”³³ This reveals the foundationally different worldviews that governed the interactions between Indigenous peoples and settlers, and clarifies that although the treaties may have been agreed to, they were not understood through the same lens by the different parties. James Frideres also notes that the federal government has fairly consistently neglected to honor the treaty obligations that were made, and when they have attempted to honor their obligations, done so in a way that minimizes their responsibility and disadvantages the First Nations groups.³⁴ Thus, the implications of the authority of the treaties continues to be worked out in the day-to-day negotiations of Canadian life.³⁵

Shortly after Confederation, the Indian Act was initiated, a government policy that mandated assimilation and manipulated Indigenous identity on settler terms. This Act was in

³¹ Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples*, 14.

³² Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples*, 13. A more detailed examination of treaty relationships is available in J.R. Miller’s book:

³³ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 45.

³⁴ Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples*, 15-16.

³⁵ At the time of writing, news is circulating about a “Cows and Plows” agreement, in which the federal government is seeking to make sets of one-time agreements, which would thus withhold some of the treaty rights of the First Nations groups. <https://www.westernwheel.ca/local-news/cow-and-plows-settlements-could-cost-treaty-rights-group-says-8423667>

place from 1876–1985, although revisions continued to be made over the century. Central to the operation of this Act was the belief that Indigenous people were not capable of governing or caring for themselves, and so they were considered wards of the state, confined to reserves, and otherwise forced to assimilate.³⁶ The Act also “defined who could be considered Indian” and ignored the often matriarchal systems of Indigenous groups, instead putting males in charge and defining Indigenous women by their relationship to their husbands.³⁷ Although the Act set aside reserve land for Indigenous people, the State retained permission to use that land should it be required for “public works.”³⁸ Thus, while the Act seemed to set aside land for Indigenous presence and purposes, the government maintained much control over the land’s use. Reserves were also governed by a pass system, which Dickason, Newbigging and Miller explain meant that most Canadians had never actually met Indigenous peoples, and which thus allowed stereotypes to flourish.³⁹

One of the tools of assimilation that the Government put into place was Residential Schools and an event known as “The Sixties Scoop.” Residential Schools were operated from 1831 until 1997, in partnership between the church and the state.⁴⁰ The purpose of these Residential schools can be understood in this brief quote from John A Macdonald, in his praise of the system to the House of Commons in 1883, the benefit of these schools was that the children ““be withdrawn as much as possible from parental influence”” so that they could ““acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.””⁴¹ In addition to the trauma of being separated from their families, and indoctrinated into unfamiliar language and religion, the

³⁶ Frideres, *Indigenous Peoples*, 13.

³⁷ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 297-298.

³⁸ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 299.

³⁹ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 360-361.

⁴⁰ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 524; J. R. Miller, *Residential Schools and Reconciliation: Canada Confronts Its History* (Toronto; University of Toronto Press, 2017), 5.

⁴¹ John A. Macdonald, cited in Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 335.

students at the residential schools also experienced mental, physical, and sexual abuse.⁴² Then Prime Minister Stephen Harper made an official apology for the Residential Schools in 2008, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was founded shortly thereafter—important context for understanding Indigenous participation and representation at the Vancouver 2010 Games.

The Sixties Scoop refers to the large increase in forced adoption that started in the 1960s and continued to the 1990s. This was another one of the tools that the government used to facilitate assimilation. By extracting young Indigenous children from their families of origin (often without approval from those families or their clans), and adopting them out to non-Indigenous families, the government could limit the transfer of culture and Indigenous identity between generations. The devastating effect that these two tools had on generations of Indigenous children, as well as the unknown death toll, is still being uncovered. Some estimates suggest that more than 20,000 Indigenous youth were taken and adopted out between 1960 and 1990, and that approximately half of these adoptions took place outside of Canada.⁴³

In addition to the assimilatory procedures enacted through the Residential School System and the “Sixties Scoop,” the Indian Act also had significant cultural impact through what was known as the Potlatch Ban. Across Turtle Island, the Potlatch Ceremony was (and is again becoming) an important part of Indigenous cultures. These events were gift exchanges that were often associated with significant social or familial events including funerals, marriages, and births.⁴⁴ Potlatches “involved singing, dancing, feasting, storytelling, oratory, and games of chance” and were a means “to manage territories and resources.”⁴⁵ Both missionaries and government agents however, viewed these events as contrary to their goals, and misunderstood

⁴² Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 489.

⁴³ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 363.

⁴⁴ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 43.

⁴⁵ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 43.

the purpose of the ceremonies.⁴⁶ Writing in 1925, missionary Charles Harrison models the misinterpretation of the potlatch in describing it as an ““impoverishing”” act of ““giving away property,”” one which he and others viewed as getting in the way of their missionary efforts, and which they also felt did not align with the government goals of productivity and assimilation.⁴⁷ Daniel Francis explains that “The government of Sir John A. Macdonald (who called the potlatch ‘a debauchery of the worst kind’) banned the potlatch...on the grounds that it and similar ceremonies encouraged barbarity, idleness and waste, interfered with more productive activities and generally discouraged acculturation.”⁴⁸ In contrast, Sara Florence Davidson (Haida/settler author, and daughter of Robert Davidson—famous Haida/Tlingit artist), explains that “in fact, the potlatches raised the social standing of the host and his family and *increased* their ‘wealth.’”⁴⁹ Participation in potlatches “ensured the continued transmission of the protocols and ceremonies associated with being Haida.”⁵⁰ As Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller explain, “this criminalization of cultural practices was a key step in the Canadian government’s mission of cultural genocide that they considered to be necessary in order to encourage assimilation.”⁵¹ Although the Potlatch Ban was removed from the 1951 revision to the Indian Act, its impact is still being drastically felt. All three of these significant acts of cultural assimilation (the Potlatch Bans, the Residential School System, and the “Sixties Scoop”) have ongoing implications for Indigenous peoples and their efforts of resurgence. While in some cases there are developments

⁴⁶ Arthur J. Ray, *An Illustrated History of Canada’s Native People: I Have Lived Here since the World Began*, Rev. and expanded ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 223.

⁴⁷ Charles Harrison, *Ancient Warriors of the North Pacific: The Haidas, Their Laws, Customs and Legends, with Some Historical Account of the Queen Charlotte Islands*, (London: H. F. & G. Witherby, 1925), 53; cited in Sara Florence Davidson, *Potlatch as Pedagogy: Learning through Ceremony* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Portage & Main Press, 2018), 5.

⁴⁸ Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian the Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*, Canadian Electronic Library. Books Collection. (Vancouver, B.C: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 99. Cited in Davidson, *Potlatch as Pedagogy*, 25.

⁴⁹ Davidson, *Potlatch as Pedagogy*, 5. Emphasis in original.

⁵⁰ Davidson, *Potlatch as Pedagogy*, 25.

⁵¹ Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller, *Indigenous Peoples*, 301.

of culture being recovered, as Davidson explains, the potlatch bans meant that significant cultural knowledge was not passed down, and some songs and dances may have been lost.⁵²

These facets of Canada's history provide crucial framing for the analyses to come. While there may be instances of active erasure in the scenes that form the case studies discussed in the forthcoming analytic chapters, it is important to acknowledge that the absences may also be an ongoing result of the assimilation and cultural genocide that was meted out generations ago.

A significant development in Canada's history occurred when it became the first country in the world to officially adopt what is known as the Multiculturalism Policy. Under Prime Minister Lester B Pearson, the Biculturalism Policy was developed to acknowledge the dual French/English heritage that shapes the Canadian nation. In response to the critique of the biculturalism policy from other minorities within Canada including, especially, Ukrainians on the Prairies, in 1971 "Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework" Policy was introduced. When introducing the policy, then Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau stated, "although there are two official languages, there is no official [Canadian] culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other."⁵³ Whether this works out in practice is one of the subjects that this dissertation investigates. The policy was revised and adapted until 1988 when it was passed into legislation as Bill C-93 "The Canadian Multiculturalism Act." The Multiculturalism Act states that the Government "is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada."⁵⁴ Although the Act did

⁵² Davidson, *Potlatch as Pedagogy*, 25-26, 34. Davidson's work also details elements of potlatch resurgence in her community through the efforts of her father.

⁵³ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Robert L. Stanfield, David Lewis, Réal Caouette House of Commons Debates, October 8, 1971, pp. 8545-8. <http://wayback.archive-it.org/2217/20101208165216/http://www.abheritage.ca/albertans/speeches/trudeau.html>

⁵⁴ "Canadian Multiculturalism Act" R.S.C., c. 24 (4th Supp) <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-18.7/page-1.html>, accessed March 4th, 2024.

not address the arts directly, the intention of the mandates that were set bore implications for cultural production. For instance, the role of the government is to “encourage and assist individuals, organizations and institutions to project the multicultural reality of Canada in their activities in Canada and abroad.”⁵⁵ Although the political history and official content of the Multiculturalism Act is important, it is equally important to acknowledge that the concept of multiculturalism settled into the imaginary of Canadian citizens and was the setting within which the Vancouver 2010 Olympics took place. In an early draft of the planning for the Opening Ceremony, the organizers state that multiculturalism “was now so accepted as to have become fundamental to the fabric of the nation.”⁵⁶ I will further discuss how this impacted the content of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, particularly in my analysis of the first and third scenes in Chapters Three and Five of this dissertation.

In more recent years, both the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991–1996) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2008–2015) have served to highlight some of the injustices faced by Indigenous peoples within Canada, and resulted in some political changes, and “Calls to Action.” In response to the Residential school systems, these federally initiated commissions sought to bring to light the impacts and injustices of the schools.⁵⁷ The final report of the TRC took into account the first-hand testimonies of many thousands of residential school survivors, and concluded with 94 Calls to Action which served as guidelines for “moving forward together.”⁵⁸ These 94 Calls to Action included a directive to the Canada Council for the Arts to prioritize funding for collaborative projects between Indigenous and non-Indigenous

⁵⁵ “Canadian Multiculturalism Act.”

⁵⁶ Ceremony Exposition, Box: 819-E-01 fld 08, Reference code: AM1550-S01-12-F038, page 9 of PDF file (no page number provided), Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) fonds, City of Vancouver Archive.

⁵⁷ Miller, *Residential Schools*, 5.

⁵⁸ Robert P. C. Joseph, *Indigenous Relations: Insights, Tips & Suggestions to Make Reconciliation a Reality* (Port Coquitlam, BC: Indigenous Relations Press, 2019), *Indigenous Relations*, 2-3.

artists.⁵⁹ The subject of the present study, the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Opening Ceremony, occurred while the TRC was conducting its research, so the Calls to Action, which were published at the conclusion of the Commission would not have directly impacted the event.

Each of these successive political developments had important implications for how the relationship between Indigenous people and the state, and Indigenous people and their settler neighbors were mandated. It is against this historical background that the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony is situated, and with these facets about the tumultuous origins of Canada in mind that my analyses of the narratives portrayed in the Opening Ceremony are conducted. Now that I have summarized the political and historical elements of the formation of Canada, I will set the parameters of the discussion within the context of two contrasting broad theories of nationalism.

Ethnic vs Civic Nationalism

Various cultural and political contexts give rise to differing types of nationalism. A crucial distinction between two main types provides an understanding of the particular type of nationalism that scholars identify as relevant to the Canadian situation and provides insight into how the state uses nationalism to curate a national character undergirded by particular ideologies and values. The first person to identify a basic distinction between two types of nationalism was German historian Friedrich Meinecke in 1907. In Meinecke's theory, "kulturnation" or ethnic nationalism exists in opposition to "Staatsnation" or civic nationalism. As professor Chaim Gans further explains, these two types of nationalism are "two distinct ideologies with different normative concerns, and that these concerns conflict with each other in most places."⁶⁰ While

⁵⁹ See Call 83. For more on the implications of the TRC for music in Canada, see Jeremy Strachan and Patrick Nickleson, "Doing Long Work: Critical Perspectives on Indigenous-Settler Collaboration in Canadian Art Music," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (2018): 83–101.

⁶⁰ Chaim Gans, *The Limits of Nationalism*, (Cambridge: University Press, 2003), 17.

kulturation arises from the concern of the ethnic or national group to maintain their identity, civic nationalism involves the work of the state to bind the group together. A similar though not synonymous distinction is that of the nation-state versus the state-nation.⁶¹ While not all scholars agree that these classifications are as distinct as Meinecke held them to be, conceiving of nationalism in this way, and applying it to the Canadian context specifically will provide theoretical grounding for the work to come.

Kulturation, otherwise known as cultural or ethnic nationalism, refers to nationalism that arises in circumstances where members of the nation are bound together by shared cultural heritage, language, or religion. Because of those shared experiences, members of the community (or nation) “have a fundamental, morally significant interest in adhering to their culture and in sustaining it across generations.”⁶² Thus, cultural nationalism exists as a ground up force—sustained by the interests and shared values and experiences of the members of the nation. Where ethnic (i.e. cultural) nationalism is the fundamental driving force, such nations can be otherwise classified as “nation-states” because it is the nation (as an ethnic group) that pre-exists the state (a political unit).⁶³ In this kind of cultural nationalism, the role of the state is to serve the nation, rather than manipulate the nation for its own goals.⁶⁴ Overall, cultural nationalism privileges cultural groups and seeks that they should operate as their own nation-states.

In contrast to kulturation, Meinecke described *staatsnation* or civic nationalism, which is defined by a “common political history and constitution.”⁶⁵ Members of the nation are not

⁶¹ Alfred C. Stepan, *Crafting State-Nations: India and Other Multinational Democracies*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

⁶² Gans, *The Limits of Nationalism*, 7.

⁶³ Gans, *The Limits of Nationalism*, 9.

⁶⁴ Gans, *The Limits of Nationalism*, 25.

⁶⁵ Harry White and Michael Murphy, *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical Culture 1800-1945* (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 2001), 3. See also, Bernard Yack, *Nationalism and the Moral Psychology of Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 24.

bound together as much by shared identity and experience, but by adherence to particular political values or ideals. Jody Berland affirms that most Canadian citizens lack a common sense of “history, language, ethnicity, religion, or belief,” (characteristics that would lead to nation-states and cultural nationalism) and thus, it is the state that continues to play a significant role in defining a national Canadian identity and culture.⁶⁶ Chaim Gans explains the difference between these two types of nationalism succinctly in relationship to the role of the state and the end goals of that particular state. According to Gans, in civic nationalism, the goal is to realize the political values of the state, which often involves coercing the citizens into a “homogeneous national culture.”⁶⁷ Recognizing these qualities of civic nationalism is important to the decolonial critique of settler colonial nationalism that is discussed later in this chapter, and also investigated in the analytic chapters to come. That Gans describes this process as striving towards homogeneity and requiring coercion illuminates the possibility that there is for underlying ideologies and biases to shape national culture without the need for them to be held by the majority of citizens. That is, as Gans explains, the political values held by the state and curated into nationalism “do not derive from specific national cultures” and “nor are they aimed at their protection.”⁶⁸ Civic nationalism then, results in a top-down, state enforced national identity which exists for the purpose of realizing political values. This description echoes the way settler colonialism operates through nationalism as will be discussed in the paragraphs below.

In opposition to this clear-cut distinction between civic nationalism and cultural nationalism, Bernard Yack argues that civic nationalism may eventually evolve into cultural nationalism as citizens of future generations inherit common values from their ancestors, even if

⁶⁶ Berland, “Marginal Notes on Cultural Studies in Canada,” 519.

⁶⁷ Gans, *The Limits of Nationalism*, 7.

⁶⁸ Gans, *The Limits of Nationalism*, 7.

those values were originally inscribed by the state as part of the national identity formation. In fact, Yack calls the civic nation a myth, and argues that the concept that the civic nation could exist “is itself a cultural inheritance.”⁶⁹ Applying this directly to the Canadian context, Yack continues, “Civic identities, like Canadian, are no less inherited cultural artifacts than supposedly ethnic identities, like Quebecois.”⁷⁰ Thus, while it is true that Canadian national identity falls within the classification of civic nationalism, as the national identity is developed around symbols and with the influence of the state, Yack argues that the national identity does indeed become culturally inherited. This is why it is critical to analyze the underlying ideologies that the government and other brokers of culture are informed by as they shape the national identity, such as I am doing in the present project. Although Yack argues that the distinction between the two types of nationalism is not as clear, he does affirm that there is still a distinction to be made between an identity that is viewed as inherent and one that is viewed as constructed or adopted, and Yack thus offers this balanced acknowledgement: “it may be reasonable to contrast nations whose distinctive cultural inheritance centers on political symbols and stories with nations whose cultural inheritance centers on language and stories about ethnic origins.”⁷¹ As I will discuss in the section below on settler colonialism and nationalism, it is on a collection of such political symbols and stories that the success of the settler colonial nation depends.

As this brief discussion of various theories of nationalism has highlighted, the shaping of a national identity can occur through shared experiences and identities or an assent (willing or unwilling) to politically informed national identity, and often involves either or both the imagining of the extent of the community and the use of shared symbols to reinforce that idea.

⁶⁹ Yack, *Nationalism*, 27.

⁷⁰ Yack, *Nationalism*, 27.

⁷¹ Yack, *Nationalism*, 28.

My study of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony is informed by a decolonial critique, and thus I am particularly interested in the development (or enforcing) of the settler colonial identity, and thus, in this dissertation I pay particular attention to the political symbols and stories that are being constructed and told as a means to shape the nation.

Throughout my analysis, I hold to the position that viewing Canada as a civic nation rather than a cultural nation offers a more potent angle for inquiry. The relationship between this invention of national identity and the characteristics and ongoing power of settler colonialism is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Settler Colonialism and Nationalism

As the previous section explained, Canada's cultural and political history and ethnic make-up is of such a disparate quality that a sense of shared national identity must be invented, and maintained, and this is often done so via a top-down, state-operated endeavor. As the final paragraphs in that section alluded to, this maintenance of national identity is one of the ways that the operation of settler colonialism can continue to be seen. Put a different way, nationalism is a tool of the settler colonial state used to justify settler presence on the land through control of the Indigenous population, and national narratives and symbols. Emma Lowman and Adam Barker state this relationship explicitly: "Colonialism in Canada is not just a legacy of earlier times, but an ongoing ideology and practice that is critical to defining the sense of both nation and self."⁷² In the next few paragraphs, I discuss the context and implications of this concept within settler colonial theory, and more specifically, within the most potent symbols used to create a Canadian national identity. These paragraphs serve as foundational material for the decolonial critiques of

⁷² Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada* (Black Point, Nova Scotia; Fernwood Publishing, 2015), 35.

the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony which will make up the successive chapters of this dissertation.

As mentioned in the introduction, settler colonialism is a distinct form of colonization that may be distinguished from “colonies of occupation.”⁷³ While many colonial activities had an exit strategy (i.e. when the colonizers return to their imperial country of origin), settler colonialism can be distinguished from these in that it is predicated on the intent to stay and thus does not have an exit strategy.⁷⁴ That is, as Patrick Wolfe has explained, the invasion that settler colonizers initiate “is a structure not an event” and the end of the narrative of settler colonialism is one of staying and domination.⁷⁵ Acknowledging this fact, and reminded of the many Indigenous and ally voices who affirm that in colonialism in Canada is ongoing,⁷⁶ one of the questions that scholars, artists, and indeed citizens must wrestle with is: can Canadian nationalism exist without colonialism? Based on the work of the scholars of settler colonialism I engage with in the following paragraphs, the answer to that question is, most simply, no. Thus, my work poses a more overarching question: what are the ways in which settler-colonialism is rehearsed, reinforced, or rejected through the symbols and stories that are chosen to curate a national identity? While my own work cannot answer this question completely, I offer this study as a means to continue to ponder what a decolonial attitude towards Canada’s existence might look like. Based on the scholarship of both scholars of settler colonialism and of Canadian national

⁷³ Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies* (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), 360–76, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470997024.ch19>, 360.

⁷⁴ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 387–409, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623520601056240>, 388.

⁷⁵ Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism,” 388; Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, (Houndmills; Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 97, 104.

⁷⁶ See, for instance, Coulthard; Robinson; Maracle; Mignolo, *Politics of Decolonial Investigations*; Regan, *Unsettling the Settler*; Furniss, *The Burden of History*; and many others. Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999) writes “in Canada, there has been no radical break with the past: Canadian culture remains resolutely colonial in shape, content, meaning and practice,” 12.

identity, I offer a summary of the elements of Canadian national identity that serve to further the ends of settler colonialism, before the presence of these elements is noted in the case studies of the Vancouver Olympic opening ceremonies coming in the successive chapters.

In the earlier portion of this chapter, I offered a brief summary Canada's political history, which demonstrated the settler-colonial roots of the state-nation construct that is now called Canada. In addition to the settler colonial historical reality, Emma Battel Lowman and Adam Barker argue that settler colonialism is constitutive of "many strongly held national myths" which help to shape the Canadian national identity.⁷⁷ While this may feel circular in reasoning, what is really being revealed here is the extent to which Canadian nationalism and the settler-colonial mindset are one and the same. That is, settler colonialism is directly involved in the establishment of national myths, and it is those national myths which then also further the goals of settler-colonialism—the destruction of Indigeneity, and the Indigenization of the settler [the overarching goals of settler colonialism, as was discussed in the Introductory Chapter]. Historian and cultural scholar Paul Litt, addressing the Canadian context specifically, affirms that nationalism works for settler colonialism by attempting to justify the settler's longstanding presence on the land.⁷⁸

This interweaving of settler colonialism and nationalism in Canada is evident in two primary qualities of Canada's national identity: an emphasis on landscape and an emphasis on peaceful relationships—or what Lowman and Barker and many other scholars, refer to as the peacemaking myth (or some other variant thereof, e.g. Litt's "Peaceable Kingdom Myth" or

⁷⁷ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 24.

⁷⁸ Litt, "Settler Colonial Theory," 3.

Regan’s “peacemaker myth”).⁷⁹ Both of these are key factors used to construct Canada’s national identity, and both, according to Lowman and Barker, Litt, and others are constitutive of the settler colonial narrative that seeks to validate and indigenize itself on stolen land. Based on these two main identity factors, I discuss more extensively the various features of these two particular ideas as foundation for identifying the elements of settler colonialism within the spectacle of Canadian nationalism at Vancouver 2010. When writing about the primary characteristics of the Canadian national identity I’m not as much interested in small-scale stereotypes, like our obsession with hockey or Tim Hortons or maple syrup, or our apologetic nature—although each of these could be categorized as sub-qualities of the main points I discuss here.⁸⁰

There are three main factors that contribute to the construction of the peacemaker myth: Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples, Canada’s peaceable relationship with internal diversity as mandated through the multiculturalism policy, and Canada’s peacemaking role in the world. Each of these seeks to further validate the settler presence on the land by upholding and reinforcing the supremacy of the settler history narrative. Johnston and Lawson explain that this is a key aspect of how settler nations are created: “the settler seeks to establish a nation, and therefore needs to become native and to write the epic of the nation’s origin.”⁸¹ In discussing each of these elements of the peacemaker myth in the following paragraphs, I devote more attention to the first two—Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples and with ethnic minorities through multiculturalism, since these are the two which are most relevant for the

⁷⁹ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 8. Also: Paulette Regan explains that it is construed primarily in opposition to the vision of settler colonialism in the United States which was much more violent; Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 89-90, 102.

⁸⁰ Hockey – winter/landscape. Apologetic nature – peacemaker myth.

⁸¹ Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 365.

analysis of the Opening Ceremony. In multiple scenes from the cultural portion of the ceremony which I analyze, these identity markers are centered and celebrated and contribute to the overall narrative of the nation that is being rehearsed. Here and throughout the analysis I aim to understand these rehearsals in connection with the settler colonial ideologies they reinforce.

In relying on representations of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples as peaceful, the settler national identity retrospectively falsifies the historical narrative for the sake of validating its superiority in the world. As Eva Mackey explains, "Canada's mythologized kindness to Aboriginal people was an important element in developing a national identity based on the notion of difference from the USA – a difference that was tied to the idea of Canadian tolerance. The contradiction is that this notion of Canada's tolerance coexisted with the brutal policies of extermination and cultural genocide."⁸² Mackey overtly states here that the representation of primarily peaceful relationships between Indigenous people and settler Canadians is not in alignment with the history of those relationships. Additionally, although Mackey writes in the past tense, the emphasis on portraying the past relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers as peaceful continues to the present day. Indigenous leader and storyteller Lee Maracle explains: "there is the myth of the nice Canadians, the just society; meanwhile, underneath is all this falsehood."⁸³ According to settler scholar Paulette Regan (who also served as research director for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission), elements of this myth in Canada include the emphasis in our history on peaceful treaty making, the curated identity of "benevolent Mounties," and the proposal that assimilationist education (for instance as pursued through residential schools) was less damaging than the physical destruction of

⁸² Mackey, *House of Difference*, 14.

⁸³ Lee Maracle, *My Conversations with Canadians*, Essais; No. 4 (Toronto: BookThug, 2017), 50.

Indigenous peoples and culture arguably seen more prominently in US contexts.⁸⁴ Both Maracle and Regan decry the falsehood of these myths and underscore the violence that was actually characteristic of Indigenous-settler encounters—a history that is being recounted by many Indigenous writers, elders, and youth today.⁸⁵ Regan explains that treaty making and other government policies often also involved coercive pressures, such as the withholding of rations, and as has become more and more evident as unmarked graves are uncovered at the sites of former Residential schools, the education process that claimed to be peaceful, was, in reality, “a weapon.”⁸⁶ Regan describes the relationship between myth and reality in Canada’s past and present as a “disjuncture,” a term which highlights the conflict between the differing narratives being presented. As the analyses in the following chapters will explain, the term disjuncture serves a dual purpose in this dissertation—affirming Regan’s use of the term to illustrate the conflict between real history and curated history, and as an analytic term borrowed from popular music studies to describe the relationship between semiotic modes within the spectacle under discussion. This parallel will be further explored in the second chapter, where I discuss the disjuncture between surface representations and structural realities, otherwise described, borrowing Mignolo’s words, as “content” and “terms.” In sum, the “Peaceable Kingdom Myth,” as Litt termed it, actually does significant damage by how it whitewashes Canadian history (and present). As Lowman and Barker assert, “We talk about being polite and respectful and peace loving. And we lie by omission, because we do not talk about our country being built on the

⁸⁴ Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, 92, 98. For more on the Mounties see Mackey, *House of Difference*, 34-36.

⁸⁵ See for instance, Dickason, Newbigging, and Miller’s retelling of the first encounters in some chapters of their textbook, as well as many others.

⁸⁶ Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, 9.

attempted destruction of many other nations.”⁸⁷ Part of the settler responsibility in anti-colonial efforts is to do the work of redressing these myths and pursuing truth.

The second element of the peacemaker myth involves Canada’s reputation as being welcoming to “outsiders”—first through immigration and refugee policy and also through the adoption of the multiculturalism policy. Most often these qualities of Canadian identity are managed for the purpose of highlighting Canada’s difference to the United States. To quote Mackey, “the notion of Canada’s tolerance is mobilised in a discourse of differentiation that constructs the USA as other.”⁸⁸ As will be discussed below in the section on “North,” Canada’s immigration policies have, at times, been far from welcoming. Lowman and Barker explain the relationship between Canada’s multicultural identity and the peacemaker myth, “The peacemaker myth is tightly entangled with the perception of Canada as a multicultural mosaic. It is a story of a Canada that, while once troubled by racial strife, has achieved enlightenment, and now welcomes all people as equals, with the same rights and responsibilities, the same respect and dignity, regardless of where they may come from or how and why they have come to the lands we all now share.”⁸⁹ The work of many scholars critical of multiculturalism works to deny this element of the peacemaker myth, as future chapters will address. For instance, Robin Maynard writes that the “uncritical and ubiquitous adoption [of the multiculturalism policy] into Canadian identity has served to disguise and insulate Canada’s racial hierarchies.”⁹⁰ Drawing on this critique from Maynard and others, in two key scenes of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Opening Ceremony to be analyzed in the upcoming chapters, I will argue that while this reliance

⁸⁷ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 1.

⁸⁸ Mackey, *House of Difference*, 2002, 31.

⁸⁹ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 45.

⁹⁰ Robyn Maynard, *Policing Black Lives: State Violence in Canada from Slavery to the Present* (Halifax; Fernwood Publishing, 2017), location 1196 of 6985, Kindle.

on multiculturalism is used to celebrate the peaceable, equal, diverse nature of Canada, it can (and is often) presented and manipulated in ways that serve to center the settler majority.

A final element of the peacekeeping myth is that Canada is a powerful peaceful presence in the world. Although this particular aspect of the peacekeeping myth is not as relevant for the forthcoming study, it is worth noting here as one of the pieces which furnishes the settler colonial narrative that is being constructed within Canadian national identity formation. Litt summarizes that Canada's international reputation was built by such things as "peacekeeping following the Second World War" and that this helped to solidify "its emergent Peaceable Kingdom identity."⁹¹

As discussed above, the peacemaking myth (with each of its three main avenues) helps to cement Canada's national identity, and although it often revolves around the past and associated historical narratives—including peaceful, treaty-based past with Indigenous neighbors, it is also still being relied on in national identity constructions. Canada continues to build an identity around being kind to Indigenous peoples, welcoming to refugees, and a force for peace in global relations. Regan also asserts that discourses of reconciliation can also function as an example of the peacemaker myth.⁹² In doing so, she echoes Robinson's concerns that words and actions of reconciliation can be non-performative, contributing to maintaining the status-quo, rather than allowing for meaningful change.⁹³

In addition to building a reputation through emphasizing peaceful relationships with internal and external "others" the settler colonial nation validates its presence and existence on the land by highlighting (and claiming possession of) the natural qualities of the land itself,

⁹¹ Litt, "Settler Colonial Theory," 8.

⁹² Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within*, 109, 115.

⁹³ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 229.

especially its “emptiness.” Lowman and Barker explain that one of the ways that settler nationalism works is through identifying something of the settlement territory that is beautiful, special, or unique, displacing Indigenous peoples from it, and gatekeeping it.⁹⁴ Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson agree that “the lands the settlers occupied were themselves given special discursive treatment. Wherever possible, the vastness of the land was emphasized and this was often a prelude to or accompanied by an even more strategic emphasis on its ‘emptiness’” because “empty land can be settled.”⁹⁵ This concept of emptiness will be further discussed in the upcoming chapters on the scenes called “Hymn to the North,” and “Sacred Grove.” In each of these scenes, I observe that the representation of empty land serves as an act of Indigenous erasure, and settler colonial attempts at validation of their own presence. Litt also identifies this emphasis on landscape as working to further the goals of settler colonialism. More particularly, in Canada, this is often characterized as an emphasis on “North” or “Great White North.” Positioning Canada’s identity as “North” places the country directly in opposition to its southern neighbor the US, and functions to ignore or erase Indigenous inhabitants, for it “conjures up the tantalizing promise of romance and riches in a wilderness *terra nullius*.”⁹⁶ Andrew Baldwin, Laura Cameron, and Audrey Kobayashi explain that the concepts of wilderness and North in Canada have direct racial implications. Aside from the obvious parallel between “white” as a reference to the geographic landscape covered by snow and its use as a marker of racial identity, the emphasis on “North” also “founds Canada’s spatial imaginary as both location and expanse.”⁹⁷ This too, has racial implications, as Beverley Rasporich and David Taras explain,

⁹⁴ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 28.

⁹⁵ Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 364.

⁹⁶ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 2.

⁹⁷ Andrew Baldwin, Laura Cameron, and Audrey Kobayashi, eds., *Rethinking the Great White North: Race, Nature, and the Historical Geographies of Whiteness in Canada*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 2.

rooted in the immigration policies first defined by the “Canada First Movement” in the 1860s. They write, “Canada First was convinced that Canada needed a distinctive culture, and it developed the concept that the nation’s geography made it inevitable that it should be northern. It was not a far jump from northern geography to racialist ideas.”⁹⁸ Eva Mackey further elaborates that “up until the Second World War, when most immigration ceased, Canada had a strict hierarchy of preferred racial groups for immigration” and, in the Immigration Act of 1910, this was based on the assumption that certain races had “climactic unsuitability.”⁹⁹ So while the peacemaking myth tends to emphasize Canada’s welcoming qualities, the contradictory quality of defining the nation as “North” and its implications for immigration demonstrate how easily the movement from characteristic landscape and weather to exclusionary policies can be made.

The idea of the North continued to become pervasive in the Canadian imaginary and in Canadian art, and music, reinforcing the settler’s authority and relationship to the land. Baldwin and co-authors explain, “the North draws together a cultural value and identity to produce a metaphor of imperial grandeur, innocence, and sovereignty.”¹⁰⁰ These qualities reinforce settler status and supremacy, and because the focus tends to be on the landscape, distract from practical injustices. Jeremy Strachan identifies the prevalence of the landscape in Canadian music and Dylan Robinson calls on scholars of music to address it as part of a decolonial idea.¹⁰¹ The Northern landscape as part of a defining feature of Canadian identity, both general and musical, persists from the early settler times through to the present day. For instance, Strachan summarizes Canadian compositions of the 1940s–60s saying: “The overwhelming preoccupation

⁹⁸ David Taras, “Introduction: The Dilemmas of Canadian Identity,” in *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century*, ed. David Taras and Beverly Rasporich (Scarborough, ON: Nelson Thomson Learning, 2001), 19.

⁹⁹ Mackey, *House of Difference*, 33.

¹⁰⁰ Baldwin, Cameron, and Kobayashi, *Rethinking the Great White North*, 2.

¹⁰¹ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 12.

that mid-century composers in Canada shared in depicting landscape and first peoples to inhabit those territories amounts to an attempt to conquer, or at least, account for, an irresolute vastness of space that had become emblematic of the nation's identity complex."¹⁰² Just like the scholars of settler colonialism mentioned above explain, the claim over landscape is a key aspect of the settler colonial method of conquest. And, as Robinson and Strachan would affirm, even depicting landscape in musical composition claims that landscape and asserts authority over it. Several famous Canadian musicians were prominent actors in initiating and sustaining the emphasis on landscape especially, Glenn Gould and R. Murray Schafer. While Schafer's contribution was primarily through composition and writing, Glenn Gould acted as a "culture broker who helped construct the myth of the Great White North."¹⁰³ Baldwin, Cameron and Kobayashi credit Gould's 1968 radio broadcast for CBC entitled "The Idea of North" as the space where he developed and promoted ideas about Canada's identity as "North," which, according to his biographer, emphasized "emptiness" and space for "recreation."¹⁰⁴ Such perspectives directly reinforce the settler colonial values that seek to claim authority over areas of land by disavowing Indigenous presence there. Similarly, for Schafer, the North was "a place of austerity, of spaciousness and loneliness."¹⁰⁵ The characteristics of the North that these composers and Canadian cultural icons emphasized is one that erased Indigenous presence, thus reinforcing the settler colonial narrative of occupying and making use of territory that, in their minds, would otherwise be empty and unused. Schafer's manipulation of this facet of the landscape in support of nationalism is explicit, as he wrote "the North is pure; the North is temptationless... The idea

¹⁰² Strachan, "Music, Communications, Place," 36.

¹⁰³ Baldwin, Cameron, and Kobayashi, *Rethinking the Great White North*, 2.

¹⁰⁴ B. W. Powe, *The Solitary Outlaw*, (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1987), 164, cited in Baldwin, Cameron, and Kobayashi, *Rethinking the Great White North*, 2.

¹⁰⁵ Programme note to Schafer's orchestral piece *North/White* (1973), reprinted in *R. Murray Schafer on Canadian Music*, (Indian River, ON: Arcana, 1984), 63. Cited in Ellen Waterman, "R. Murray Schafer's And Wolf Shall Inherit the Moon: The Nexus of Ideal and Real Wilderness," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 33, no. 2 (1998): 140.

of North is a Canadian myth. Without a myth the nation dies.”¹⁰⁶ The logic of settler colonialism is evident in these comments from Schafer, affirming Johnston and Lawson’s statement that narrating stories and myths helps to establish the settler nation, reinforcing in cultural product and social imaginary what was (and is) true of the physical presence of settlers on the land.¹⁰⁷

As I have discussed in the previous paragraphs, the two primary identity factors with which Canada identifies itself (“North” or vast/impressive landscape and peaceful or multicultural nation) both serve to reinforce the settler colonial foundations of the country, and thus support the operation of settler colonialism. The peacemaking myth whitewashes Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples in both past and present, promotes its supremacy as a peaceful power in the world, and manages and mandates internal diversity through the multiculturalism policy. These concepts reinforce the settler identity and ideology and contribute to nation building efforts. Similarly, Canada’s claims of possession over beautiful and vast landscape (emphasizing its vastness and thus “emptiness”) and its identity as “North,” further contribute to settler colonial goals through the erasure and absencing of Indigenous peoples. Most often, when these facets of the Canadian identity are performed or emphasized, Indigenous peoples are either marginalized, entirely erased, or their presence ignored via the appropriation or stereotyping of their art and other cultural artefacts.¹⁰⁸ As noted in the paragraphs above, these identifying features of Canada operate as myths which contradict the reality and history of the founding of the nation, and the present injustices faced by Indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups within Canada. As I will further discuss in the analytic chapters of this dissertation, despite the work of Indigenous opposition and resurgence as well as the partnership of settler allies,

¹⁰⁶ Schafer, *R. Murray Schafer on Canadian Music*, 63.

¹⁰⁷ Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 365. See also Lowman and Barker as discussed above.

¹⁰⁸ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 2.

emphasis on North and landscape continue to go hand-in-hand with the absence and erasure of Indigenous identity and presence from Turtle Island in contemporary spectacles. In the analysis of three scenes from the cultural portion Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony, I will specifically note the ways in which emphasis on landscape, North, multiculturalism, and peaceableness continue to be foregrounded in representations of Canadian identity. I will observe how these both directly and indirectly contribute to the erasure of Indigenous presence and sovereignty. Elements of music, visuals, and texts which support the Eurocentrism and white supremacy of settler colonialism will be identified and their relationship to one another, and their use in support of landscape and multiculturalism tropes will be illuminated through the multimodal analysis and decolonial framing of my study. Before moving on to the analytic section of the dissertation, the remainder of this section of the chapter will discuss the role of spectacle in reinforcing narratives.

Performance of National Identity through Spectacle

Having provided contextual information about how nationalism is theorized, and given a brief historical overview of the primary elements of national identity construction in Canada and their relationship to settler colonialism, it is important now to explain the role that national spectacles, such as the Olympics, provide in curating and reinforcing that national identity. Symbols of identity come to have meaning and gain acceptance through repetition. Historian Eric Hobsbawm noted that repeated ritual and symbol help to inscribe particular values and imply historic continuity, which, as the previous section discussed, is an element that settler colonizers require in order to build and validate their nation, and is identifiable within the

Canadian example.¹⁰⁹ Andrew Ives applies Hobsbawm's theory directly to the Canadian context and explains that "Canada may lack cultural homogeneity...[but] it has gradually built up a set of symbols of nationhood."¹¹⁰ Evidence of these symbols, and their role in this construction of national identity will be investigated in the latter portion of this dissertation. Of particular relevance to the present study is the concept that the repetition and performance of stories and myths in theatre or spectacle aids credence to that narrative. Similarly, as scholars of opera acknowledge, when this repetition occurs in the context of a theatrical performance, the weight of that performance is emphasized: "the theatre is seminal to the commemoration because it has the power to reinforce the national narrative, and, if that theatre is an institution, it can give the chosen narrative status."¹¹¹ Referring specifically in this quote to the shaping of national identity through opera, Paula Danckert's observation here allows me to make a connection between the operatic theatre and the Olympic theatre. As I will argue below, a parallel understanding of national operas and the theatrical nature of the ceremonies at the Olympics facilitates critique of the kinds of national identity that are being discussed and constructed at each.

The role of the Olympic Games in functioning as a national identity spectacle has been identified and critiqued by John MacAloon. In an early text that has been widely referenced, John MacAloon considers the relationship between spectacle and festival, ritual and game.¹¹² According to MacAloon, theorizing the Olympic games as a spectacle provides opportunity to

¹⁰⁹ E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1. Andrew Ives, "Pan-Canadian Nationalism since 1867: Precarious Nation-Building Revisited in Light of the Writings of George Grant and Eric Hobsbawm," *Études Canadiennes / Canadian Studies. Revue Interdisciplinaire Des Études Canadiennes En France*, no. 84 (June 30, 2018): 96.

¹¹⁰ Ives, "Pan-Canadian Nationalism," 96.

¹¹¹ Paula Danckert, "Louis Riel: History, Theatre, and a National Narrative – An Evolving . . . Story." *University of Toronto Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (2018): 40.

¹¹² John J. MacAloon, "Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle in Modern Societies," in *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, ed. John J. MacAloon (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984).

address the distance between image and reality. Applying the cultural critiques of historian Daniel Boorstin and philosopher Guy Debord to the Olympic context, MacAloon asserts: “if the images of shared humanity generated by the Games simply ignore the structural realities that separate men from one another... then the spectacle has made us victims of the most dangerous illusions.”¹¹³ MacAloon’s concern here echoes Maracle’s concerns about the distance between myth and reality already present in Canadian identity. Additionally, MacAloon’s work draws attention to the power that spectacles such as the Olympics have for reinforcing these myths. While spectators may be caught up in the brilliance of the spectacle, it is necessary, following MacAloon’s warning, to investigate what these illusions may be communicating, or what damaging realities they may be covering. One of the techniques that I argue will help to reveal the distances between image and reality that MacAloon calls us to heed, is the multimodal analysis I propose to use in the later analytical chapters of this dissertation. In Chapters Three and Four, I assert that disjuncture between the narrative that each mode (visuals, text, and music) communicates separately, echoes the disjuncture that MacAloon implies here (and Regan mentioned above) between image and reality. In Chapter Five, I argue that the modes amplify one another, but that the message they amplify is one that is in disjuncture with the reality of life for minoritized peoples in Canada. Before getting to those analyses, in the following chapter, I develop an analytic framework that brings together the techniques of multimodal analysis with the decolonial critiques of Walter Mignolo, Glen Coulthard, Dylan Robinson, and others. By combining these critiques with this methodology, I hope to answer the warning that MacAloon raised here. The multimodal analysis takes apart the elements of spectacle in order to understand

¹¹³ MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle,” 273. For the role of sport in this, see Anouk Belanger, “The Urban Sport Spectacle: Towards a Critical Political Economy of Sport,” in *Marxism, Cultural Studies, and Sport*, ed. Ben Carrington & Ian McDonald (New York: Routledge, 2009).

what types of injustice lie underneath the surface. This opening of surface representation in order to identify and critique structural reality echoes the decolonial activity that Mignolo, Coulthard and Robinson have each called for. In the final section of this chapter, I look to other sorts of musical spectacles to discuss some of the overlapping characteristics of colonialism and musical nationalisms, providing examples from various historical and cultural contexts.

Colonialism and Musical Nationalisms

Precedents in Music/Western Music's Most Infamous Case

Having provided an overview of the relationship between Canadian nationalism and settler colonial nationalism, I now turn to the links between music and nationalism, discussing them broadly before focusing on the influence of operatic productions on nationalism and drawing a parallel between those spectacles and the spectacles of Olympic opening ceremonies.

Discussions of musical nationalisms in this section also provide evidence for what I am calling a “universalizing discourse within nationalism,” which relates the nationalism of prior centuries to the same universalizing tendencies of settler colonialism (as Walter Mignolo’s work establishes). This provides a foundation from which my decolonial investigations will continue throughout this dissertation.

Relating Olympic Ceremonies to Nationalist Operas.

The study of opera is a field in which the role of spectacle in national identity construction is often considered from a musical perspective. Providing historical-contextual information from opera studies enriches my discussion of the role of music within Olympic ceremonies in rehearsing a national identity and facilitates greater understanding of how particular narratives—especially those chosen by people in positions of power—are used to shape national culture. Similarly, comparison to nationalist opera provides a potent reminder that often these stories

exist in the realm of fiction, which thus allows us to see what happens when these fictions are not curbed. In this section, I draw parallels between operatic spectacles which operate in service of nationalism, and Olympic spectacles, which also serve to rehearse national identity on a similar scale. One interesting aspect of this comparison is purely statistical—Canadian Olympic ceremonies have a much broader reach than did even the most popular Canadian opera. Because of the difference in historical context, Canadian operas do not have the same cultural impact that German or Russian or other operas would have had in their historical context, however, Olympic ceremonies, with the national and international multimedia spectacle that they have become, reach audiences which number in the millions and come to have the impact on the minds and lives of citizens that European operatic spectacles of previous generations may have engendered in their own audiences. In discussing the impact of Canadian operas, for example, R Murray Schafer provides statistics on the reach of the Canadian opera *Louis Riel*—often considered to be Canada’s most significant national opera. Commissioned in celebration of Canada’s centennial celebrations in 1967, Harry Somers’s opera *Louis Riel* was performed in Montreal and reached an audience of about 3,000, and in 1968 performed by the COC to an audience of around 8,000. It was also broadcast on the radio and was heard by an estimated 1.4 million Canadians. When it was broadcast on TV in 1969 it also had an audience of 1.4 million and the producer called it “the first successful Canadian opera.”¹¹⁴ In contrast, the Canadian audience for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic games averaged at about 13.3 million over the course of the evening.¹¹⁵ Thus, while in previous generations, nationalist operas could be said to have a significant impact on the

¹¹⁴ Franz Kraemer, cited in R. Murray Schafer, *The Public of the Music Theatre: Louis Riel, a Case Study*, 1. Auflage, (Wien: Universal, 1972), 23.

¹¹⁵ “Opening Ceremony Called Most-Watched Program Ever in Canada,” *Sports Business Journal*, February 15, 2010, accessed Mar 12, 2024, <https://www.sportsbusinessjournal.com/Daily/Issues/2010/02/15/Olympics/Opening-Ceremony-Called-Most-Watched-Program-Ever-In-Canada.aspx>

construction of national identity, now that impact has shifted to other nationalist spectacles, such as the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympics.

Bridging the work of John MacAloon, who theorized spectacle through the Olympics (as discussed above), and integrating the theories of musicologist, Benjamin Curtis, I argue that Olympic ceremonies can be considered nationalist proto-operas, opening up greater analytical options to scholars and interpreters, and facilitating interdisciplinary dialogue. Cross pollination between these two groups, that is, media and Olympic scholars who theorize spectacle, and music scholars who study nationalist opera will enrich our study of these events, and enable scholars to be more keenly aware of the contributions that music makes within both of these types of spectacles to the construction of national identity.

Although the opening ceremonies of Olympic Games cannot be considered “nationalist operas” by nineteenth century European standards, a number of shared techniques reveal the correlative identity of these events, and the historic musical precedence for the theatrical performance of national identity. Musicologist Benjamin Curtis provides a helpful set of parameters for identifying the characteristics of nationalist operas. He narrows these down to four repeated characteristics in operas, and adds that curated festivals can also be an indicator of strong nationalist intentions. The four qualities that Curtis identifies are as follows: “reliance on a ‘folk’ element, ...language, the use of themes from history and legend, and references to the national landscape.”¹¹⁶ The link between these characteristics and the settler colonial national characteristics discussed above are immediately apparent—an emphasis on landscape, and the need to curate myths that present a particular version of history. Curtis provides examples for these characteristics in operas by nationalist composers Richard Wagner, Bedrich Smetana, and

¹¹⁶ Benjamin W. Curtis, *Music Makes the Nation: Nationalist Composers and Nation Building in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Amherst, N.Y: Cambria Press, 2008), 43.

Edvard Grieg. Each of these characteristics is present in the scenes which are analyzed in the case studies to come and contribute to shaping a national narrative. Before moving to those analyses, a fuller discussion of nationalism as it is identified in music will provide greater musical context for this study.

Musical Nationalism

One cannot discuss music and nationalism without reference to German composer Richard Wagner. Wagner's infamy is due to his own Anti-Semitism, and in part, through Hitler's admiration and promotion of his music. Besides those dangers however, the Wagner example is particularly relevant for the present study because of how his operas functioned as nationalist. Curtis explains, "The idea of the theater's representative function—depicting the idealized vision of the nation back to itself—is the kernel of Wagner's entire conception of the national theater."¹¹⁷ Wagner's German nationalism is relevant to the present study in that his emphasis on creating historical continuity and an "idealized vision of the nation" echoes that same goal in the process of settler colonial nationalism, as discussed in the sections above. Although the nation that Wagner was concerned with building was not a settler colonial nation, it was still one that required constitution by certain myths—myths which contributed to the exclusion of particular groups of the population. Philip Ther argues that Wagner achieved this in part by the spectacle of his operas—providing visual cues in the costumes and sets, as well as musical cues which helped the audience engage with the work as reality rather than myth. Ther explains, "reviews show that audiences believed they were watching the nation's forebears enact a very real chapter of history."¹¹⁸ Ther's assertion about these operas echoes the concerns which MacAloon described

¹¹⁷ Curtis, *Music Makes the Nation*, 52.

¹¹⁸ Philipp Ther, "The Genre of National Opera in a European Comparative Perspective," in *The Oxford Handbook of the New Cultural History of Music*, ed. Jane F. Fulcher (Oxford University Press, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195341867.013.0008>, 192.

in his analysis of Olympic spectacles—that is, that what is presented in spectacles comes to stand in for the realities of life. Similarly, one of Wagner’s goals was to cement German national identity through an invented historic continuity, a point which Hobsbawm affirms as one of the key characteristics that identifies the validity of a nation, as noted in the discussion of nationalism above, and which is a crucial aspect of settler colonial identity construction. Elsewhere, Ther writes about Wagner’s *Ring Cycle*, and explains, “The Ring thus became a part of the Germanic cult that drew a line of historical continuity from the ancient Germanic peoples to modern Germans.”¹¹⁹ Philip D’Agati affirms that performing and imagining historical continuity is a crucial aspect of the identity construction that occurs at the Olympic Games. D’Agati writes, “national performance through the Olympics becomes the means of reinforcing previously existing written or oral narratives of national identity or as a channel through which particular chronicles are revised.”¹²⁰ D’Agati continues, “by accepting historically driven myths that claim modern nations are legacies of an ancient past, we further disseminate and institutionalize these claims.”¹²¹ It is beyond the scope of the present study to engage with Wagnerian opera beyond these brief notes, but the parallel between the nationalist techniques that composer adopted made note of by the scholars mentioned here and the similar techniques being employed in the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony is striking. By making note of this technique within Wagnerian opera, I continue to place the Olympic Spectacle in alignment with those operatic spectacles, and call for continued critique of national identity representations that reinforce myths of racial hierarchy, or which seek to promote a legacy of either historic or moral continuity as means of validating the position of the powerful.

¹¹⁹ Ther, *Center Stage*, 60.

¹²⁰ Philip A. D’Agati, *Nationalism on the World Stage: Cultural Performance at the Olympic Games* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2011), 36.

¹²¹ D’Agati, *Nationalism on the World Stage*, 37.

In my analysis of the spectacle that follows, I notice that Canadian national identity constructions echo this aim at historic continuity not necessarily by attempting to go as far back to a mythical past as Wagner did, (although that may be what occurs in the first example scene, to be discussed in Chapter Three) but by maintaining a claim that settler interactions with Indigenous peoples have always been peaceful. In other words, Canadian identity is reinforced less so by an invented historic continuity than it is by an invented moral continuity based on the peacemaking/Peaceable Kingdom myth as discussed above. Whereas the settler colonial peacemaking myth attempts to validate settler Canadian identity in contrast to an American past which was characterized by settler violence towards Indigenous peoples, Canadians tend to instead emphasize stories of peaceful negotiation and life together through treaty relationships. Mackey refers to this as the myth of “white settler innocence” which is frequently demonstrated through the depiction of “‘positive,’ ‘generous,’ and ‘tolerant’ treatment of Native people” by the settler population” in cultural productions and spectacles.¹²² In later chapters, the evidence of this moral continuity of peacemaking between Indigenous peoples and settler will be analyzed in the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony.

Based on Curtis’ framework of the characteristics of nationalist opera outlined above, making the comparison from Canada’s Olympic Opening Ceremony to a Wagnerian opera is not as distant a comparison as it may initially seem. Nor is it without purpose. It is to demonstrate how national imaginary can be shaped by artistic products, and how harmful underlying ideologies can weave their way into what may initially seem harmless cultural presentations. Although scholars have debated the back and forth influence of Wagner’s operas on Hitler’s anti-

¹²² Mackey, *House of Difference*, 26. See also, Dylan Robinson, “Peaceful Surface, Monstrous Depths: Barbara Pentland and Dorothy Livesay’s *The Lake*,” in *Opera Indigene: re/presenting first nations and indigenous cultures*, ed. Pamela Karantonis and Dylan Robinson (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011).

Semitism, what can perhaps be said, and noted as a warning, is that unchecked nationalism in the hands of uninformed citizens has violent and dangerous consequences—as MacAloon’s assertion (that spectacle blinds audiences to injustice) also heeded.¹²³ My study here aims to mitigate some of those dangers by drawing attention to the underlying ideologies that shape such spectacles in the Canadian Olympic context.

Nationalist Music and Musical Appeals to Universality

In addition to the contribution made by operas to musical nationalism, an interesting connection can be made between the beliefs of superiority of some nationalist composers and the universalizing aims of coloniality. One of the ways composers believed a national identity could be achieved was through successfully mastering the best of all other musical styles, and thus having their style become the best, or universal. Similarly, the underlying logic of coloniality (which Mignolo would say was the driving force for all of modernity from 1500–2000ff) is one which seeks to maintain control through “epistemic and aesthetic universality.”¹²⁴ In this section of the chapter, I refer to this logic as the national/universal paradigm, and explore its presence in historical musicological examples as a parallel to the settler colonial logic that will be discussed in the Vancouver Opening Ceremony in the later analytic chapters of this dissertation.

Composers have long acknowledged that music can be used to express and help shape a sense of national pride, or cohesiveness among citizens, as well as delineate the sense of national self from exotic other.¹²⁵ This process is not necessarily organic and is usually controlled by those in power. As Philip V. Bohlman explains, “Naming the nation through music is inevitably

¹²³ For a summary of some of the positions on Wagner, see David J Levin “Reading Beckmesser Reading: Antisemitism and Aesthetic Practice in The Mastersingers of Nuremberg,” *New German Critique* 69 (Autumn 1996): 127–146.

¹²⁴ Mignolo, *Politics of Decolonial Investigations*, x.

¹²⁵ See for instance, Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2009).

a top-down gesture. An intellectual and political elite representing the nation appropriates and consolidates power by extending the nation's name to as many musical phenomena as possible."¹²⁶ Less well documented, although present in the arguments of some of these composers, is evidence that the ability to blend a variety of different national techniques or "flavors" was viewed as a mark of superiority and quickly assumed to mean that that nation's taste or style had thus become universal, and that this indicated the superiority of their nation. Combining those facets of literature with Mignolo's decolonial investigations, I argue that the logic of coloniality is evident in this national/universal paradigm. I offer three brief examples of this—each from different eras and different nations—as a means to facilitate the future discussion in this dissertation (and beyond) of decolonial approaches to the study of nationalism and music, and similarly, to ignite the reader's attention to the colonial attitudes that posture this claiming of diversity for the purpose of self-definition. To apply this directly to the Canadian context that I will discuss in the forthcoming chapters, it is the assumption of superiority and universality through management of diversity that characterizes the displays of settler colonial nationalism at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, and it is that same management of diversity that is assumed to characterize national supremacy in the writings of the composers mentioned here.

One of the earliest pieces of evidence of the nationalist/universalist discourse in Western music history comes from the work of Joseph Joachim Quantz. Quantz was a German composer most noted for his flute music. As Richard Taruskin explains, in Quantz's treatise on flute playing, the author asserted that "the virtue of German taste lay in knowing 'how to select with due discrimination from the musical tastes of various peoples what is best in each' and blend it

¹²⁶ Philip V. Bohlman, *Focus: Music, Nationalism, and the Making of the New Europe*, 2nd ed, (New York: Routledge, 2010), 33.

all into a higher unity.”¹²⁷ Here, Quantz asserts that one of the characteristics of the German national identity (as expressed by composers in their music) was that they could discern what was best, and bring it together in a way that was superior to the original materials. I suggest that this concept parallels the extractive mindset of colonialism—mining resources (natural, geographical, or cultural) for the benefit (fiscal or cultural) of the settler or imperial culture. In the proceeding discussion of similar musical eclecticism at Vancouver 2010 (especially that of the Fiddle Scene addressed in Chapter Five), I draw a parallel between Quantz’s assertions here, and the multicultural narrative that Canada promotes as being one of inclusion. In the multicultural and decolonial critiques that I will draw on in counter to these so called “Canadian” values, it becomes evident that when diversity is operated and managed with only the interest of the majority in mind, it actually serves to further the values of Eurocentrism, whiteness, and settler colonialism (as the work of Mackey and many others establishes). In making mention of Quantz’s ideals here, (and those of other composers in the paragraphs that follow) I recognize, drawing from Mignolo, the origins and implications of this universalizing aesthetic. As Taruskin goes on to explain, this belief did not stop with Quantz, but from his example, and that of the German Romantic composers after him, “the programme of German nationalism quickly metamorphosed, for music, into one of German universalism.”¹²⁸ The movement from nationalism to universalism that Taruskin exposes here, is, I argue, direct evidence of the universalizing aesthetic that Mignolo claims is characteristic of colonialism.

Other nationalist composers have been even more overt in their assertions that this capacity for blending eclectic sources into a cohesive national product was a mark of supremacy. For instance, in describing Mikhail Glinka’s generation of Russian composers, Taruskin

¹²⁷ Richard Taruskin, “Nationalism,” *Grove Music Online*, 2001; Accessed Dec 7, 2023, *Oxford Music Online*.

¹²⁸ Taruskin, “Nationalism.”

acknowledges that they believed that “combining or ‘organically’ uniting the best of the West... affirmed the universality of Russian culture, hence its superiority to all other cultures.”¹²⁹

Similarly, 19th century American composer Horatio Parker (most well-known for having been the teacher of Charles Ives at Yale) worked in the north-eastern United States at a time when that country’s development of a national, musical identity was under serious debate. When asked what would distinguish American composers from European composers (a similar distinction that Canadian identity attempts to achieve from its larger, more powerful neighbor), Parker responded that an American education was not enough, a composer “ought to know other Countries, other Peoples, and other languages” so that “in time the best work of Americans will be the equal artistically of the best work on earth.”¹³⁰ In this way, it is evident that Parker believed that to become the best American composer, one had to master and successfully blend the work of everyone else. Thus, for Parker, as for Glinka and his Russian compatriots, and for Quantz and future generations of German composers, the management of difference was an essential means of performing their own national identity, and proclaiming their superiority in the world.

Having moved through two centuries and across two continents, a specific Canadian example will also serve well here. Although I have not yet encountered a specific quote from a Canadian composer which echoes the words of the composers discussed above, musicologist Elaine Keillor’s suggestion that Canadian composers rely on the process she terms “rubbaboo” (a word itself appropriated Indigenous culture), and which she uses to mean mixing and borrowing

¹²⁹ Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, (Toronto, Oxford University Press, 2010), 239.

¹³⁰ Horatio Parker, “Music in America,” Lecture, HP Papers Yale University, Box 36, Folder 2, 1901, insertion to page 17.

from others, reflects the process I am interested in identifying and critiquing here.¹³¹ In explaining what makes Canadian music distinct, Keillor writes “Listeners around the world are intrigued with how Canadian musicians approach the varied intermingling strains that make up our cultural mosaic. When Canadian music is performed abroad, audiences recognize a quality that differs from the structure and logic of German music, the colour and sensuality of French, or the rhythm and conceptualism of America.”¹³² Keillor’s construction here about the distinctiveness of Canadian music echoes those claims of the composers named above—each one asserted that the music of their nation would be distinct, and perhaps even surpass the value of others, precisely by blending the music of those others into a “higher unity” (as Quantz put it). Although in this excerpt she writes about differing from European characteristics, elsewhere Keillor has written about the attempts of Canadian composers to use Indigenous musics for similar purposes, and advocates for a continuation of that process in developing Canadian music.¹³³ Robinson’s critique of such a process makes clear the colonial mindset which underpins these intentions: “To frame Indigenous music as a national resource is to guide the listener toward hearing musical (and nation-to-nation) relationship as one of integration where such integration means Indigenous assimilation within shxwelítemelh form and function.”¹³⁴ The disregard for Indigenous ethical values and protocols that these compositional techniques require comes from the hungry settler listening positionality, and forces Indigenous creativity into settler forms which it was never intended to fit.

¹³¹ Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2006), 364. Keillor explains: “the term rubbaboo has a number of different spellings. It was borrowed from a soup made from pemmican, water, and a flavouring (such as Saskatoon berries) in the Northern Plains area,” 364.

¹³² Keillor, *Music in Canada*, 252.

¹³³ Elaine Keillor, “Indigenous Music as a Compositional Source: Parallels and Contrasts in Canadian and American Music,” *Taking a Stand: Essays in Honour of John Beckwith*, Ed. Timothy McGee, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 185–218.

¹³⁴ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 13. See page 2 and 3 for is explanation of shxwelítemelh. Not repeating Robinson’s explanation here is one of the intentional choices I made to respect his work.

While on the surface the grandiose claims these composers make may seem somewhat innocuous, the implications of the nationalist/universalist paradigm are much more damaging, and, when made explicit, are clearly rooted in problematic ideologies of whiteness and Eurocentrism. Based on the descriptions of nationalism from the earlier portions of this chapter, nationalism was all about shaping a cohesive unit, through an already existent ethnic community, through imagined community, or through political efforts (or a combination of these three). Moving a step beyond defining a nation to claiming universality meant that the aim for composers was no longer simply about remaining confined to their own particular national styles, but rather absorbing all styles into their own and yet still identifying the end product as one which served their own gain. This absorption of other ideas and identities into one's own for the purpose of defining an identity echoes the extractivist intent of settler colonialism discussed earlier. As discussed in the introduction, part of the colonial mindset involves both the extraction of Indigenous materials, and the extraction of natural materials for the financial benefit of the colonizing nation. While the examples I have provided here do not focus on the use of Indigenous musical excerpts (beyond Robinson's critique of Keillor),¹³⁵ when viewed through the lens of the colonial matrix of power, the choices the composers make here reflect the colonial mindset of extraction, claiming ownership over what is not rightfully theirs, and manipulating it in order to secure the superiority and benefit of those in power. Further, as I argue throughout the rest of this dissertation, this attitude mirrors the settler colonial undertones of the multicultural branding that Canada has adopted. To put it even more clearly, Canada, in claiming to welcome

¹³⁵ There are many other examples of discussions of Indigenous music having been used as a resource by Canadian and American composers. See for instance, Jeremy Strachan and Patrick Nickleson, "Doing Long Work: Critical Perspectives on Indigenous-Settler Collaboration in Canadian Art Music," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (2018): 83–101; Tara Browner, "Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890–1990" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1995).

all cultures into the multicultural nature and diversity of the country, does so not simply for the purpose of inclusion and diversity, but rather for the purpose of maintaining its own national identity. This will be further explored in Chapter Two, as the decolonial lens is applied to discussions of inclusion and multiculturalism, before being critically and artistically explored through the case studies of the Vancouver Olympics Opening Ceremonies in the analytic chapters in the second section of the dissertation.

The Move to Universality

Based on the examples discussed above, I understand appeals to universality as evidence of coloniality because they claim superiority and simultaneously deny the existence of other ways of knowing and being, in ways that align with the ideologies of colonialism. Claiming western/European universality is “a downgrading if not an outright disavowal of all the coexisting non-European praxes of knowing and knowledge.”¹³⁶ As Walter Mignolo’s assertions make clear, the goal of consuming everything else and proclaiming your own universality is definitive of the Colonial Matrix of Power, which he understands as the undergirding principle of the last 500 years of history. In the examples above, various composers modeled this posture in how they discussed the music of their nations. Each one of them emphasized the need to master a diversity of other styles, and then incorporate them into their own for the purpose of claiming superiority. In essence, these nationalist appeals become universal appeals, in a very easy move from “we are a group” to “we are the best group.” The effect of these nationalist efforts is thus to exclude and marginalize—a trend which will be evident in the successive analytic chapters of this dissertation. By bringing these particular examples to attention in my dissertation, I am calling for other scholars to continue the work of decolonizing how Indigenous music is

¹³⁶ Mignolo, *Politics of Decolonial Investigations*, 461.

discussed, taught, and appropriated, and also continue the work of addressing whiteness in our discipline—a task which, in many ways, has begun, but requires significant further pursuit and humility.¹³⁷

Conclusions of Chapter One

In conclusion, in this chapter I have mapped out in three broad sections a wide variety of contextual material which is foundational to my analysis of the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver Olympics. To understand the identity construction that is being performed and rehearsed at Canadian Olympic events from an interdisciplinary musical perspective, it is crucial to connect Canada's history, the aims of nationalism and settler colonialism, and the role of music in nationalism. Providing historical and political background to the creation of the Canadian nation, and situating Canadian nationalism as a type of civic nationalism (where the role of the state is highlighted in creating a unified nation from groups that lack ethnic/historical/religious or other shared characteristics) grounds this study within relevant context. Additionally, exploring the relationship between nationalism and settler colonialism elucidates the ways in which settler colonialism is constitutive of Canadian nationalism via two particular qualities—the possession of (stolen) landscape and the emphasis on maintaining the appearance of peacefulness. In Canadian settler colonial nationalism in particular, these myths are curated through the identity of Canada as the Great White North and as Peacemaker. Both serve to construct an identity that results in the exclusion and erasure of Indigenous peoples and other minoritized groups. Although on the surface these identity myths seem harmless, they are, at least in part, responsible for maintaining the status quo of injustice and reinforcing the aims and narrative of settler colonialism, as my work in this dissertation goes on to show. In

¹³⁷ See, especially, the work of Philip Ewell.

establishing the position I take in the forthcoming analyses, I acknowledge the role of Olympic spectacle in blurring injustice (from MacAloon) and align Olympic spectacle with operatic spectacle (building from the work of Curtis). Finally, I concluded the chapter with a section on what I have termed the nationalism/universalism paradigm. Drawing on the decolonial critiques of aesthetic universalism by Mignolo, I applied this concept to the ideas of musical nationalism in the words of several composers. In each instance, these composers claim superiority (and thus universality) through the management of difference under the guise of nationalism. In the forthcoming analytic chapters, I will draw out this idea in the way Canada's identity is rehearsed at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games. In the next chapter, I draw on the disjuncture mentioned in this chapter between Canada's reality and the settler colonial national myths and approach it with the incisive nature of multimodality in order to critique the distance between surface representation and structural reality. Drawing from the work of several anti-colonial scholars, I build up an analytic framework that serves to unite the decolonial lens with the multimodal methodology as a response to MacAloon's warning about the dangerous illusions of spectacles. In the three succeeding analytic chapters, I use multimodal analysis to unveil the problematic representations and rehearsals of Canadian identity in three example scenes from the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games.

Chapter Two – Surface Representation, Structural Reality, and the Decolonial Impulse of Multimodal Analysis

Introduction

In the work of scholars who are critical of multiculturalism, EDI strategies, and decolonization, a common thread of concern emerges that changes to policy and rhetoric do not indicate real, structural, political, and practical change. Put another way, such a concern emphasizes that changes in dialogue do not enact in practice what they purport to espouse. The most famous aphorism regarding this problem in relationship to the process of decolonization was asserted by Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang when they wrote that “decolonization is not a metaphor.”¹ As discussed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, that means decolonization must involve the “relinquishing... of land, or power, or privilege,” and that it cannot merely stay in the realm of dialogue.² If decolonization stays simply in the realm of dialogue, that is where it becomes metaphorical, and does not enact. In the foreword to the book, *Decolonizing Equity*, OmiSoore Dryden similarly noted that “equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) practices” would continue to operate as “tools to maintain the status-quo” unless there is effort toward “substantive structural change.”³ Based on these critiques, and many others that inform the construction of this chapter, I describe these problems as a disconnect between the way surface level changes are made, while structural level policies and ideologies remain unchanged. In the first portion of the chapter, I review a variety of literature that helps to form the basis for this surface/structure opposition. I also put these in dialogue with Walter Mignolo’s assertion that decolonial activity must involve correctives to both the content of the conversation

¹ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40.

² Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 19, 21.

³ OmiSoore Dryden, “Pedagogies of Dissent: Meditations on Decolonial Disruptions,” in *Decolonizing Equity*, ed. Billie Allan and V. C. Rhonda Hackett (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2022), 1.

or engagement and the terms on which that engagement occurs, thus aligning surface/structure with content/terms.

In the middle of the preceding chapter, I briefly discussed the idea that multiculturalism operates within Canadian national identity as a continuing stream of the settler colonial mindset. This chapter will more fully explore the relationship between settler colonialism and multiculturalism. Based on Mignolo's work and that of scholars who critique multiculturalism, I affirm that official multiculturalism reflects colonial activity in that it treats other cultures as resources to be extracted for the purpose of the well-being and prosperity of the over-arching culture. As the discussions and definitions of settler colonialism mentioned in the introduction highlighted, settler colonialism extracts wealth, culture, and natural resources from Indigenous possession for the sake of creating its own wealth and identity. I view Canada's multicultural and diversity practices as a continuation of this theft. From these critiques, it becomes obvious that inclusionary performance (a procedure defined by Robinson as one aspect of multicultural, decolonial, and reconciliatory action) operates at a surface level and has not wrought meaningful change.

In the second portion of this chapter, I combine the multimodal methodology with the anti-colonial framing of this dissertation to develop an integrated analytic framework for assessing how coloniality operates at surface, symbolic, and structural levels. I affirm that diversity or multiculturalism efforts often only make surface level changes which appear to be inclusive, while policies, practices and other underlying structures remain unjust. This framework draws together the work of Walter Mignolo, Dylan Robinson, Glen Coulthard and others, and further, justifies the multimodal methodology that I have adopted for the present study. Drawing connections between the interactions of multimodal elements in an artistic presentation (in this

case, the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games), and the workings of settler colonialism in surface, symbol, and structure provides insight for how decolonial efforts must similarly attend to these three levels of organization or presentation. Alongside many others, I argue that surface-level changes (those marked by representation, diversity, and inclusion efforts) are not necessarily sufficient to invoke change in the understanding of the public, nor in the policies of the society at large. However, attention to representation in combination with growing efforts to undo systemic and structural injustice will lead us on the path to freedom from settler coloniality.

In the final portion of the chapter, I summarise some existing alternate actions and positionalities which picture anti-colonial ways of being in the world and, building from the work of bell hooks and Daniel Chua, suggest self-giving love as an overarching anti-extractive positionality. I discuss the implications of adopting love in a decolonial posture for how citizens and scholars might engage with the world. If the settler positionality is one which is built from the extractive and self-seeking goals of colonialism, an anti-settler-colonial positionality can be brought to fruition through a posture that is generous and self-giving.

The primary thesis of this chapter is that multimodality can serve artistic decolonization by undoing the characteristics of spectacle (MacAloon) so that scholars and artists can address the settler colonial qualities in artistic productions and illuminate how decolonization and reconciliation narratives are often only surface level changes which actually serve to reinscribe settler colonial power (Coulthard, Robinson, et al). True decolonization requires both surface and structural changes, or as Mignolo puts it, changes in content must be accompanied by changes in terms. This concept informs the forthcoming analytic chapters by promoting a deep and nuanced analysis of the role of each artistic element in curating particular kinds of narratives and

ideologies. It is crucial, following these warnings, not to mistake changes of content (i.e. Indigenous inclusion, overall diversity) as markers of structural changes being made.

Inclusionary Music, The Politics of Recognition, and Content vs. Terms

At the hinge point of the preceding chapter, I introduced the warning that John MacAloon made regarding Olympic spectacles and their distance from reality. In that warning, MacAloon asserted that there are “structural realities that separate men from one another” and that if the “images of shared humanity” made visible in the Games are taken uncritically then “the spectacle has made us victims of the most dangerous illusions.”⁴ MacAloon’s concern in this critique is that the spectacle of togetherness that the Games present may foster feelings of right relationship, but do little to effect those relationships outside the theatre of the games. This concern is strikingly similar to one raised by Dylan Robinson regarding what he refers to as the performance of reconciliation in contemporary Canadian artistic practice. In Robinson’s evaluation and experience, inclusionary musics (which he defines as those which force Indigenous artists to ‘fit’ within a western classical frame rather than being built through actual intercultural exchange) “perform” reconciliation, and may result in feelings of reconciliation, but are (building from the work of Sara Ahmed and Judith Butler), essentially, “non-performative.”⁵ That is, these performances do not have the effect that their discourse and presentation seeks to produce. Where Indigenous artists, and settler or other artists collaborate, the positive audience response to such a performance is not necessarily indicative that reconciliation is taking place. Robinson writes, “In sum, the intensity of affect when experiencing socially and politically

⁴ John J. MacAloon, “Olympic Games and the Theory of Spectacle in Modern Societies,” in *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, ed. John J. MacAloon (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1984).

⁵ Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 6, 229.

oriented performance allows for a conflation of affect with efficacy. Audiences are persuaded, or more accurately *feel*, that something has happened; a moment (or more) of something ineffable that might best be called ‘reconciliation’ has been witnessed.”⁶ As Robinson explains elsewhere, these feelings of reconciliation may in fact limit motivation for making practical change: “The affective component of reconciliation engenders great hope, but may do so as an end in itself. Rather than galvanizing audiences to continued action for restorative justice, these works afford the feeling of friendship in place of fostering new alliances sought by First Peoples in nation-to-nation models of political sovereignty.”⁷ The works the audiences experience thus do more to make those audiences *feel* reconciled, than they do to actually enact reconciliatory relations (just like MacAloon asserted of Olympic spectacles). In Robinson’s succinct summary, “inclusionary music may here stand in for more significant forms of action and redress.”⁸

Just as Robinson’s response to this non-performativity of inclusionary music and its associated reconciliatory feeling is to implement close analyses which seek to understand and classify the encounters of Indigenous and non-Indigenous musics and musicians beyond mere inclusion,⁹ so also in this dissertation do I seek to closely read and critique the performance of national identity within the spectacle of the Olympic Opening Ceremony to highlight the ways in which this celebrated inclusionary performance spectacle rehearses problematic power dynamics, and Eurocentric narratives. Heeding MacAloon’s warning in tandem with the work of Robinson demonstrates the need for an analytic framework which can take apart the intricacies of the spectacle, while also questioning the underlying ideologies and structures of power that are at

⁶ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 218.

⁷ Dylan Robinson, “Feeling Reconciliation, Remaining Settled,” in *Theatres of Affect*, ed. Erin Hurley (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2014), 304.

⁸ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 230.

⁹ Dylan Robinson, “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics: Contemporary Encounters between First Nations/Inuit and Early Music Traditions,” in *Aboriginal Music in Contemporary Canada: Echoes and Exchanges*, ed. Beverley Diamond and Anna Hoefnagels (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2012), 229.

play. Thus, in this chapter I develop a framework that combines the techniques and advantages of multimodal discourse analysis with the goals of anti-colonialism. In doing so, I bridge the work of Robinson and MacAloon to avoid the blindness caused by spectacles and inclusionary music performances, which, by their affective potency, detract from active justice and reconciliation.

What Robinson's (and indeed, MacAloon's) critiques reveal is that although there may be a change in the content that is being rehearsed and represented, the terms which govern how that content is managed and presented are not being changed. Robinson describes this when he notes that the people in control of the inclusionary music performance are most often settlers, and that the performances usually occur within the context of the western art music scene and are mandated by their associated strictures.¹⁰ Robinson's assertions in this work reflect what Walter Mignolo states about decolonial investigations more broadly. A lack of attention to the relationship between what he would label the "content" and "terms," argues Walter Mignolo, is precisely how coloniality is maintained. The terms, in Robinson's example then, are things such as the staging and governing principles of the artistic performance, and the content is the music itself, and the presence of a variety of performers. Therefore, Mignolo continues,

the major task of the politics of decolonial investigations—its 'raison d'être'—is to change the terms in which the conversations on knowing, understanding, and existing take place, rather than to change their content (ontology) while preserving their terms. And changing the terms means to change the questions upon which Western knowledge and regulation of knowing are founded and to engage in epistemic restitution.¹¹

For Mignolo then, changing the content of any interaction (be it political, musical, or otherwise) while maintaining the very terms which govern those interactions, is not true decolonization.

¹⁰ Robinson, "Politics of Aesthetics," 246.

¹¹ Walter Mignolo, *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 535.

In order to achieve a change in content and accompany it with a change in terms, Mignolo describes two different “levels” of engagement: “Underneath, metaphorically speaking, the level of the domains (what has been said, what is being said, the content of the conversations), lies the level of the enunciation (the saying, the terms of the conversations that regulate their content).”¹² To put Mignolo’s concern in a way that more closely engages the current analytic project, what is seen (i.e. the content) in the performance of inclusion, diversity, or multiculturalism at the Olympic Opening Ceremony is regulated by an unseen set of terms. As I argue in the analytic chapters of this dissertation, settler colonial terms are evident through practices of erasure, and extraction. In the same way that Robinson’s concern about inclusionary music is that it affects reconciliation without effecting it, so also do I see that inclusionary performance at the Olympics can occur without significant impact to the underlying terms (which in this case is settler colonialism) that governs Canada’s national identity constructions.

To bring Mignolo’s work more explicitly into the Canadian context, I align it with the anti-colonial position that Dene scholar Glen Coulthard has advocated for. In his work, Coulthard rejects what he calls the “politics of recognition” (drawing from the work of Charles Taylor, Frantz Fanon, and Richard J.F. Day). Coulthard uses “politics of recognition” to refer to how the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian State changed after 1969. While before that time the government’s policies had been “unapologetically assimilationist,” they were now being developed around concepts of “mutual recognition.”¹³ These so called “recognition-based models,” Coulthard writes, “seek to ‘reconcile’ Indigenous assertions of nationhood with

¹² Mignolo, *Politics*, 46. Coincidentally, “domains” is also a word used by multimodal analysts to name the various “expressive channels” of a “media artifact,” such as the Olympic event under discussion in this dissertation. Lori Burns, “Dynamic Multimodality in Extreme Metal Performance Video: Dark Tranquility’s ‘Uniformity.’ Directed by Patric Ullaeus” in *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Popular Music Video Analysis*, ed. Lori Burns and Stan Hawkins (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 184.

¹³ Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, Indigenous Americas (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 3.

settler-state sovereignty via the accommodation of Indigenous identity claims in some form of renewed legal and political relationship with the Canadian state.”¹⁴ However, Coulthard critiques this form of recognition and instead argues that “the politics of recognition in its contemporary liberal form promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples’ demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend.”¹⁵ In reading Coulthard’s work, I observe that his critiques of the politics of recognition highlight the same problem that Mignolo’s explanation of content vs. terms reveals. That is, to put it into language that bridges the work of both of these scholars, the politics of recognition changes the content of the conversation without changing the terms of the conversation. This is because, as Coulthard writes elsewhere, “recognition is conceived as something that is ultimately ‘granted’ or ‘accorded’ to a subaltern group or entity by a dominant group” and thus power is maintained by the colonizers.¹⁶ The politics of recognition changes the content of the conversation in that through it, the government seeks to grant space and sovereignty to Indigenous groups, but maintains the terms of the conversation by assuming that that space and sovereignty is its own to give in the first place. Rather than the state mandating and controlling identity and recognition, the alternative, Coulthard explains (following Fanon) is self-determination, in which Indigenous peoples are “the creators of the terms and values by which they are to be recognized.”¹⁷ Activity that attends to these Indigenous-created terms and values and seeks to honor them is thus where true decolonial work happens. The links between Mignolo’s, Coulthard’s, and Robinson’s framing of these issues, and their implications for critiquing multimodal artistic spectacles will

¹⁴ Coulthard, *Red Skin*, 3.

¹⁵ Coulthard, *Red Skin*, 3.

¹⁶ Glen S. Coulthard, “Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the ‘Politics of Recognition’ in Canada,” in *Home and Native Land: Unsettling Multiculturalism in Canada*, ed. May Chazan, Anna Stanley, and Sonali Thakkar (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2011), 33.

¹⁷ Coulthard, “Subjects of Empire,” 43.

be further explored in the middle portion of this chapter as I explain the interaction of their ideas in the conceptual analytic framework I develop. Before turning to that section however, I further align these critiques with a broader discussion of multiculturalism, which several scholars identify as problematic in ways which reflect the content/terms issue that I have drawn from Mignolo.

The issues which the construction of content vs terms highlights, essentially summarizes Coulthard's and Robinson's critiques regarding Indigenous recognition by the state and Indigenous/Settler collaboration, and is also relevant in addressing critiques of multiculturalism and EDI initiatives. Robinson quotes Eva Mackey, a scholar whose work in critiquing multiculturalism in artistic and national spectacles has been foundational. He summarizes,

in her critique of the inclusionary nature of multiculturalism in Canadian society, Eva Mackey notes that the word "inclusion" reinforces the dominance of those in power that decide who and who not to include (Mackey 2002). The word "inclusion" by its very nature expresses a hegemonic position. Similarly, when this model of inclusion is applied to intercultural music making in Canadian art music genres, the issue of power is once more at stake.¹⁸

Mackey's critique of the word "inclusion" and its implications for maintaining the power of the dominant demonstrates the need to address practices of recognition and inclusion beyond mere surface level representation. When Mignolo states that what is required is a change in terms, it does not mean merely changing the words we use to describe a situation (or moving from exclusion to inclusion), but changing the underlying principles which govern the engagement. Robinson, drawing from Mackey here, illuminates that observable practices of inclusion do not necessarily imply that the underlying principles of engagement have been at all meaningfully changed.

¹⁸ Robinson, "Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics," 237; citing Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

Similarly, in Coulthard's framing, multiculturalism is, in fact, a policy of recognition. He writes, "the logic undergirding this dimension—where recognition is conceived as something that is ultimately 'granted' or 'accorded' to a subaltern group or entity by a dominant group or entity prefigures its failure to significantly modify, let alone transcend, the breadth of power at play in colonial relationships"¹⁹ Augie Fleras agrees, "Multiculturalism is explicitly about justice, participation, and inclusion for minorities and migrants; implicitly it's about securing dominant interest and the prevailing status quo."²⁰ These descriptions of how multiculturalism can operate within and in support of the dominant power system provide context for understanding multiculturalism as inclusionary, and also for relating it more directly as a tool of settler colonialism. Building from Robinson, I consider multiculturalism to be a tool of settler colonialism in that it reflects the extractive mindset that is characteristic of settler colonial ideology (as discussed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation).²¹ As is common with the extractive principles of settler colonial practice, multicultural efforts tend to treat cultures as resources to be mined, resulting in what appear to be powerful changes in representation, but in reality, leaving the structures of power unchanged. As Dryden articulates, "if systems are only able to address discrete 'symptoms,' the underlying social structures remain untouched and the complexity of meaning and representation is occluded."²²

Changing the Terms

The essential question that we are left with, following these vociferous critiques is thus, what would changing the terms look like? If inclusionary performance in music, and as I argue in

¹⁹ Coulthard, "Subjects," 36.

²⁰ Augie Fleras, "Managing Difference, Making a Difference: Multiculturalism as Inclusive Governance in Canada," in *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Multicultural Governance in Comparative Perspective*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 57.

²¹ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 49.

²² Dryden, "Pedagogies of Dissent," 3.

the forthcoming chapters, inclusionary performance in the cultural portion of the Olympic ceremony is merely a change of content without attention to a change in terms, how will close critique of this changing content equip us to further critique the terms and thus make changes to the terms? Further, what will the content look like once a change in terms has been more thoroughly achieved? To answer some of these questions, I look again to the work of Mignolo, who explains changes in terms as being evidenced through changes to the governing principles of interaction, or the underlying logics which govern society, from being built on universal western principles to allowing for pluriversal expressions. Then, as I argue in this chapter, a multimodal analysis equips the critic to see whether only content is changing, or whether terms of engagement are being negotiated as well. Finally, once I have introduced and summarized the analytic framework which bridges the decolonial scholarship of Mignolo, Coulthard, and Robinson in alignment with the multimodal efforts, I conclude with a discussion of what a change in terms would look like in the context of a performance.

For Mignolo, a change in terms is summarized by a shift from aesthetics and epistemology to aesthesis and gnoseology. In Mignolo's explanation, epistemology and aesthetics are problematic because they have been framed by Western modernity as universal concepts; using these words as authoritative and definitive of their respective fields reinforces hegemonic views and promotes "intellectual arrogance."²³ As alternatives, Mignolo offers gnoseology instead of epistemology and aesthesis instead of aesthetics. Using these alternative terms releases them from the Eurocentric standards that are implied by the former. While epistemology refers to a certain standardization of knowledge or ordering of thinking, gnoseology is a term which rejects the "assumed universality of Western knowledge and ways of knowing" and thus roots types and

²³ Mignolo, *Politics of Decolonial Investigations*, 54, 533.

ways of knowing to particular locations instead.²⁴ Similarly, Mignolo explains that the concept of “aesthetics” colonized the concept of aesthesis. In the mid-eighteenth century, aesthetics was used to define the perception of beauty and sublimity using Western standards, destituting the original meaning of the term from being and sensing.²⁵ In contrast, aesthesis refers much more broadly to “perception by the senses.”²⁶ Using literal alternative words accompanies and represents the conceptual change in terms because it delinks the concepts from the Western norms that have been assumed as the universal standard.²⁷ As Mignolo’s usage of these words reveals, wherever action is taking place that disobeys and delinks practices from Western standards, it can be referred to as gnoseological and aesthesis reconstitution, and is a critical part of the decolonial operation. Mignolo continues, “When it comes to coloniality, art and aesthetics were used to talk ‘about’ objects and people’s attitudes outside of Europe and to label them art and aesthetics. Such a method serves well to devalue and destitute the meaning that a given object or performance has for the community in which the object has been made and the relations that the community establishes with the object or performance.”²⁸ An example of this process can be observed in Robinson’s description of the Gitksan limx’ooy (dirge song) that he refers to in his book, *Hungry Listening*. In the *Delgamuukw v the Queen* court case, Gitksan hereditary chief Antgulilibix, Mary Johnson, requested to sing a song as part of the proceedings to invoke oral history, but the judge was reluctant, although eventually allowed it. The judge, reinforcing his original position, stated “this is a trial, not a performance.”²⁹ In doing so, he was operating out of a colonial concept of art and aesthetics that devalued and destituted the meaning that

²⁴ Mignolo, *Politics of Decolonial Investigations*, 54-55.

²⁵ Mignolo, *Politics*, 55-56.

²⁶ Mignolo, *Politics*, 56.

²⁷ Mignolo, *Politics*, 56.

²⁸ Mignolo, *Politics*, 56.

²⁹ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 44.

limx'oooy has for Indigenous people, and its function as “an Indigenous legal order.”³⁰

Decoloniality, as Mignolo puts it then, involves undoing this restrictive colonial definition of art and aesthetics. For instance, in the example discussed above, this would involve no longer restricting songs to performance but rather, valuing their sacred position as law, or oral history, and more. This concept is particularly relevant for the artistic production under discussion in this dissertation; I refer to how Indigenous creativity has been devalued and destituted by settler colonialism in the ways that it has been removed from its original context and meaning and brought into the Opening Ceremony to serve the goals of nationalism.³¹ This process of analysis demonstrates how content is being changed (for instance, to appear more inclusive), but also highlights how the terms of engagement are still founded in Western ways of knowing and Western aesthetic standards. Providing a literal change in terms from “aesthetic” and “epistemological” to “aesthetic” and “gnoseological,” which Mignolo does here, reflects the greater conceptual change that using these new words aims to achieve. Operating with aesthetics and gnoseology as our terms of engagement rather than aesthetics and epistemology “delinks” (to use Mignolo’s word) us from the assumption that Western values are universal.

While Mignolo’s suggestion for initiating and observing changes in terms is one that functions in a fairly abstract sense (although it has practical implications for our engagement with art and knowledge), Coulthard’s more practical alternative is that changing the terms is the difference between a politics of recognition (which reinforces coloniality of power) and Indigenous self-determination (or resurgence or presencing) in which Indigenous peoples operate

³⁰ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 44.

³¹ Robinson’s work takes this idea even further in that he says we ought not to think of these things as objects, or rather, that Indigenous people do not necessarily consider these to be “artistic products” or mere “objects,” but instead as relatives, or ancestors (*Hungry Listening*, 87), and that they should be returned to the communities in a process that he refers to as redress.

on their own terms, rather than on the state's terms. For Coulthard, the antithesis of colonial erasure is not a politics of recognition, which as stated above, leaves the power in the hands of the colonizer. Rather, it is Indigenous self-affirmation and self-determination brought about through "critically reevaluating, reconstructing, and redeploying culture and tradition."³² It is also more than just self-affirmation and self-determination. Drawing from the work of Taiaiake Alfred and Leanne Simpson, Coulthard, as well as Dylan Robinson, explain the alternatives to Eurocentric and settler colonial control of the terms as Indigenous resurgence and refusal.³³ Another Indigenous author, Audra Simpson explains: "there is a political alternative to 'recognition,' the much sought-after and presumed 'good' of multicultural politics. This alternative is 'refusal.'"³⁴ As she defines it, refusal is

a political and ethical stance that stands in stark contrast to the desire to have one's distinctiveness as a culture, as a people, recognized. Refusal comes with the requirement of having one's *political* sovereignty acknowledged and upheld, and raises the question of legitimacy for those who are usually in the position of recognizing: What is their authority to do so? Where does it come from? Who are they to do so?³⁵

Indigenous refusal thus inverts the framework of recognition by questioning the presumptuous authority of the settler colonizers and rather works from the assumption that Indigenous sovereignty is already a reality, not something that must be granted by the settler state—a complete reversal of the terms. Robinson extends the concept of refusal to include both content refusal and structural refusal (or, in the words of Mignolo, content and terms, and as I use later in

³² Coulthard, "Subjects," 50.

³³ Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*, 154.

³⁴ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Duke University Press: London, 2014), 11.

³⁵ A Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 11.

this chapter, surface and structure).³⁶ At the surface level then, Robinson explains “refusals of content...withhold information...affirm and center Indigenous perspectives, and they demarcate Indigenous sovereignty upon the page.”³⁷ On the other hand, “structural refusal” operates at a deeper level and is interested in effecting an actual “epistemic shift” (or “gnoseological,” as Mignolo would say).³⁸ Robinson’s explanation demonstrates how Indigenous refusals of content can work, and how structural refusal differs from that. In the work that follows, while my main object of inquiry is to critique elements of settler colonialism within the Opening Ceremony of Vancouver’s 2010 Olympics, it is also important to note how Indigenous agency continues to operate in refusing to settle for the inclusionary, recognition-based surface changes and continues to advocate for structural and epistemic changes. The analytic framework I develop in the later section of this chapter equips settler scholar audiences to detect content changes and critique the distance between those changes in content and the stasis of structural hierarchies and oppressions.

In addition to the overarching concept of refusal, Robinson also offers practical suggestions which enact the delinking process explained by Mignolo. Going beyond inclusionary music, Robinson creates the formula “Indigenous+Art music,” which he argues frames a more level collaboration rather than a hierarchical engagement that forces Indigenous music to fit a Western frame.³⁹ That is, Robinson’s suggestion is that we must look for performances which “destabilize the order of art music hegemony” or which communicate a different kind of

³⁶ With this discussion and the analytic framework that I develop out of it, I’m not trying to force Robinson’s ideas to fit Mignolo’s frame, or vice versa, but merely hold them in dialogue, noticing their similarities as a way of offering fruitful consideration for walking towards a decolonial future. The deepening move from content to terms, or in this case, content to structure also offers such useful framing for multimodal or interdisciplinary art productions and their role in culture creation.

³⁷ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 23.

³⁸ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 24.

³⁹ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 9.

engagement by offering their performance in a different location, such as “the choice both to move art music out of the sanctity of the concert hall and to engage with a different community.”⁴⁰ These sorts of engagements and productions would demonstrate a rejection of the politics of recognition, a delinking from Western control of the terms of engagement, and thus a clearer move to a decolonial future. In contrast, in the context of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony, I observe how inclusionary performance maintains the status quo, reinforcing settler colonial values. That is, in the analysis and critiques which come in the following chapters, I am not just looking at whether there are inclusions of Indigenous culture and other minoritized cultures or not, but how those inclusions are framed, treated, and manipulated and what that reveals about the underlying structure. For example, in Chapter Four of this dissertation, I analyze a scene from the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony which includes images of totem poles, and argue that the artistic representation and use of those images in the ceremony re-centers a settler colonial framing of art and aesthetics, thus demonstrating that changing content doesn’t always result in any significant change in terms. As Robinson’s work establishes, inclusionary performance or performances of reconciliation don’t always affect political realities. As he explains,

Although First Nations, Inuit, and Western art music composers alike continue to be drawn to intercultural creation, continue to refine mutually respectful models for collaboration, and continue to present and learn from the diversity of traditions encompassed in early music and First Nations and Inuit cultural practices, such intercultural work must not fall short of addressing the politics of aesthetics enacted symbolically in the encounters taking place in musical works and concerts.⁴¹

Robinson’s phrase “politics of aesthetics” echoes Coulthard’s “politics of recognition” and calls attention to the continued need for political change to occur beyond mere aesthetic inclusion. In

⁴⁰ Robinson, “Politics of Aesthetics,” 246.

⁴¹ Robinson, “Politics of Aesthetics,” 247.

the forthcoming critiques in the analytic chapters of this dissertation, I continue these efforts.

Before moving on to those analyses however, I propose a conceptual analytic framework in order to facilitate a decolonial engagement with spectacles and artistic productions which is attentive to both content and terms, or as I write here, surface, symbol, and structure.

Identifying Coloniality in Surface, Symbol, and Structure

In Canada and other settler colonial nations, decolonizing efforts are often partnered with or replaced by EDI strategies, and an emphasis on multiculturalism. However, as discussed above, these three streams (multiculturalism vs EDI vs decolonization) which claim to work towards justice and inclusion all suffer from very similar critiques, that is that they are ineffective and further reinforce whiteness or settler-colonialism. As discussed in the preceding sections of this chapter, multiculturalism is often identified by members of minoritized groups as forcing them into one particular kind of frame (Western), and decolonizing efforts and EDI strategies have similarly been cast as “non-performative” (Robinson, drawing on Butler or Ahmed) or “metaphorical” (Tuck and Yang), and as “tools to maintain the status quo” (Dryden).⁴² In casting decolonization and EDI strategies as “non-performative” or “metaphorical” or “tools to maintain the status quo” these authors explain that though the words we use and the way we discuss these issues may change, this change in dialogue does not enact what it purports to. Similarly, as discussed above, when there are changes to representative content within artistic performances or spectacles, these changes may serve to satiate settler guilt and dissuade us from making more substantive changes to political engagements and the terms which govern such collaborations (as Robinson’s work above illustrates, placed alongside Mignolo’s decolonial suggestions). Noticing these tendencies aligns with what Tuck and Yang

⁴² Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 229; Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor;” Dryden, “Pedagogies of Dissent,” 1.

warn against when they say that decolonization often remains metaphorical, that is, that it remains in the realm of dialogue, rather than enacting meaningful change. Practically speaking, “land, or power, or privilege” thus remains in the hands of settlers, rather than being returned to Indigenous peoples. With attention to the work of Mignolo, Robinson, Coulthard, Mackey, Tuck and Yang, and many others, I explore these failings as being a result of focusing on making changes to content (what I refer to in my framework as “surface level” or immediately visible situations), while symbolic and structural interactions remain unchanged, and in fact, continue to enact settler colonialism. In other words, my work here attempts to understand how what is visible (the music, visuals, and texts used in the Opening Ceremony) reveals what is not visible—the ideology or underlying logic (in this case, settler colonialism). That is, these analyses attempt to demonstrate within artistic representations the types of changes that Mignolo’s “content and terms” construction posits. Although, as is more often the case in the analyses that follow, what is evident is a lack of change in terms despite the changes in content that are being encouraged; settler terms are reinforced in the way the artistic elements of the ceremony are included and arranged.

I come to this understanding of visible vs not visible through the methodology of multimodal discourse analysis, but also via the work of Walter Mignolo (South American decolonial scholar) and Willie Ermine (Cree professor, known especially for developing the concept of “ethical space”). In the same way that Mignolo draws a distinction between decolonization and decoloniality, (the former referring to the physical act of removing or the departure of the colonizer, and the latter referring to the counterpart intellectual/aesthetic process), he distinguishes between colonialism and coloniality. “Coloniality,” Mignolo

explains, “names the underling logic of all western European colonialism.”⁴³ Such an “underlying logic” is not always immediately obvious, and as Mignolo continues, it thus “names something you do not see that operates in what you do see.”⁴⁴ In casting colonialism/coloniality this way, Mignolo alerts the attentive reader and critic to an essential truth about colonialism. Colonialism works because it is undergirded by a particular way of believing about the world—it is based on underlying assumptions. To understand these assumptions, we must look no further than the work of Willie Ermine. Although he does not pinpoint the same colonialism/coloniality distinction as Mignolo does, Ermine’s work highlights the fact that part of the decolonial task is to “understand and confront the hidden interests, attitudes and bedrock assumptions that animate Western dealings with Indigenous peoples.”⁴⁵ What Mignolo refers to as the “underlying logic,” Ermine refers to as the “undercurrent...an analogy used to describe these subsurface interests and attitudes that continually influence communication and behaviors between individuals, organizations and nations.”⁴⁶ Ermine further relates this to what feminist scholar Peggy McIntosh has referred to as the “unseen dimensions” of the operation of social systems.⁴⁷ In putting together the analytic framework in this chapter, I argue that sometimes the logic of coloniality is immediately visible, and at other times, the logic becomes visible as we question and critique the more intricate organizational and artistic choices made in the content of the semiotic modes.

The bedrock principles and underlying values which sustain colonialism, for both Ermine and Mignolo, are rooted in the assumption of Western universality. Ermine writes, “in the West,

⁴³ Mignolo, *Politics*, 469.

⁴⁴ Mignolo, *Politics*, 469.

⁴⁵ Willie Ermine, “The Ethical Space of Engagement,” *Indigenous Law Journal* 6, no. 1 (2007), 197.

⁴⁶ Ermine, “Ethical Space,” 198.

⁴⁷ Ermine, “Ethical Space,” 198, citing Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” in Paula S. Rothenburg, ed., *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 165-168.

this notion of universality remains simmering, unchecked, enfolded as it is, in the subconscious of the masses and recreated from the archives of knowledge and systems, rules and values of colonialism that in turn wills into being the intellectual, political, economic, cultural, and social systems and institutions of this country.”⁴⁸ As discussed in the previous chapter, Mignolo also considers the pursuit of universality by the West to be constitutive of modernity, and the underlying force of coloniality. For Mignolo, this coloniality is worked out in particular spheres of control, what he calls the “colonial matrix of power.” Mignolo’s conception of the colonial matrix of power (which he builds from the work of Anibal Quijano) is that it is something that coloniality of power specifically creates in order to justify itself and maintain control.⁴⁹ In Mignolo’s explanation of the colonial matrix of power, or CMP, these assumptions and prepositions are meted out in what he calls four “domains,” (again building from Quijano’s foundation).⁵⁰ These four domains are (1) knowledge/understanding, (2) governance/legal authority, (3) economic, and (4) human/humanity.⁵¹ The CMP exerts control over each of these areas, and defines each via Western values, promoting universality. Mignolo continues, “delinking from the colonial matrix of power is not a question of content or a question of what we talk about: it is about the presuppositions and assumptions on which we ground our talking and doing; it is *about the terms of the conversations, not just the contents.*”⁵² Thus, any activity

⁴⁸ Ermine, 198.

⁴⁹ Mignolo, *Politics*, 9.

⁵⁰ Mignolo, *Politics*, 36-37. Cultural studies and feminist scholars, and anyone who studies relationships of power and oppression will notice the similarity between Mignolo’s language here (both in using the term “domains” and in the term “matrix”) and the work of Black Feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins. Mignolo does not refer to Collins’ work at all, but there are certainly similarities between their work. Collins uses the term “matrix of domination” to refer to an “overall social organization within which intersecting oppressions originate, develop, and are contained.” (292) The four domains of power that Collins describes are the structural, the disciplinary, the hegemonic (which she later re-names the cultural) and the interpersonal (349). While Collins’ domains are hierarchical in that they move from large scale to small scale, Mignolo’s domains all operate within the same realm.

⁵¹ Mignolo, *Politics*, 36-37.

⁵² Mignolo, *Politics*, 13. Emphasis in original.

that seeks to be decolonial will address not only the content, but also the “presuppositions and assumptions” which underlie that content. In the following analytic portions of this dissertation, I aim to do just that. Before moving to that task however, I discuss my analytic framework that aligns the work of Mignolo, Robinson, and Coulthard with the multimodal methodology as a means of more clearly addressing these terms.

Developing the Framework

Attending to the implications of colonialism in both surface and structure (that is, content and terms) avoids the pitfalls that these critical scholars notice. It aims to move decolonizing efforts beyond the realm of just content changes to the realm of the terms so that true decolonial freedom will be enacted. These efforts, I believe, will help us, as citizens of Canada, as occupiers of Indigenous land, as neighbors of Black, Indigenous, and other Peoples of Color to be aware of not only the ways in which textual, musical, and visual cues teach us to act and shape how we think, but will also enable us to identify the ways in which the very operational intent of our society is unjust. As the work of the scholars mentioned above highlights, attempting to correct representational absence and erasure through repeated emphasis on multiculturalism, or EDI strategies alone does not sufficiently change the structures that govern our societies and feed our unjust mentalities. In contrast, listening to (and then seeking to respond as good neighbors to) the work of critical scholars and our BIPOC neighbors, helps to reveal that multiculturalism and inclusionary efforts are not as effectual as their immediately perceivable results purport to be.

To help explain and visualize this, I have designed this analytic framework which shows the different levels of colonial control, how that may be expressed in aesthetic modes, and the interpretive results which point to the need to address the terms beyond the content. I also argue that these interpretive results may in turn reveal the relationship between what is projected as

reality and what is experienced as reality in Canada. I align these multimodal analytic techniques with the decolonial work of Mignolo, Coulthard, and Robinson in order to provide a nuanced and integrated conversation about how decolonial practice and efforts towards inclusive artistic representation efforts must be considered together, and with attention to the structures which govern these interactions.

	Mode	Analytic Result (Goodwin)	Level	Decoloniality (Mignolo)	Politics of Recognition (Coulthard)	Politics of Aesthetics (Robinson)
1	Single mode	Absence or erasure	Immediate evidence of coloniality (surface)	Content	Lack of Recognition	Colonizing Impulse
2	Single mode	Diversity or inclusion	Surface level decolonization, reconciliation	Content	Politics of Recognition	Inclusionary Performance
3	Multiple modes	Disjuncture or amplification	Investigative evidence of coloniality (symbolic)	Content	Politics of Recognition	Inclusionary Performance
4	Multiple modes	Disjuncture	Investigative evidence of coloniality (symbolic)	Content (and Terms)	Indigenous Resurgence	Agonistic dialogue → truth telling
5	Spectacle vs. reality	Disjuncture	Inherent evidence of coloniality (structural)	Content vs. Terms	Towards Indigenous Resurgence?	Non-performative reconciliation
6	Spectacle and reality	Amplification or illustration	Towards a decolonized future	Terms and Content	Indigenous Resurgence	Agonistic dialogue → truth telling

Table 2.1 The Analytic Framework – Anti-Colonial Multimodality

Explaining the Framework

To explain the framework thoroughly, I will address each column and its relationship to the ones nearest it, before discussing each row as well. There are three rows that are particularly relevant to the current study, and I will address those in more depth following the initial discussion. These are, the second row, because it addresses issues of diversity and inclusion as stemming out of the politics of recognition, and the final three rows. Rows 4 and 6 are particularly important because they envision a different set of relationships based on movement that I describe as “towards a decolonized future,” and/or “evidence of Indigenous resurgence.” These two rows are where I observe anti-colonial activity as being most prominently evident. In contrast to the preceding rows, where changes of content fall within inclusionary performance and the politics of recognition, these bottom two rows represent disruptions to the terms (via Indigenous resurgence) and a vision of a world where both the terms and content have been changed (the decolonized future to which I refer).

The left-most column (“Mode”) situates the framework within the context of multimodality by listing the presence of aesthetic modes, whether single, or multiple. In the fourth row of this column, I expand on this concept by explaining that the presence of multiple modes could be indicative of a spectacle, which as MacAloon and others explains, may present content that is in opposition to reality—thus, my phrase “spectacle vs reality.”

The second column (“Analytic Result”) uses the analytic terms from multimodal scholar Andrew Goodwin to explain the combined result of the interaction of the modes. In the first row, I have used the terms “absence” and “erasure” from anti-colonial studies, since a multimodal analytic result is not relevant in this row since it addresses a single mode only. As discussed in the introductory chapter, I use Andrew Goodwin’s terms illustration, amplification, and

disjuncture to describe the relationships between different semiotic modes. In this analytic framework, I also apply his terms beyond the scope of only the multimodal content to express the relationship between spectacle and reality. In doing so, I echo the use of the term disjuncture by anti-colonial scholar Paulette Regan who used it to describe the opposition between Canada's history and the curated myth that is presented as Canada's history.⁵³

The third column, "Level," describes what I term the different "levels" or "layers" at which the presence of coloniality is evident. Like authors such as Patricia Hill Collins and Walter Mignolo argue, systems of power and oppression operate at various layers within society, so also in this column (and in this study in particular), does coloniality operate at different levels of artistic expression. Building from the previous two columns, in the first row, I explain that when absence or erasure of Indigenous creativity or sovereignty is immediately evident in a single semiotic mode, this is surface-level coloniality. The goal of colonialism (that is, the elimination of the native, and the indigenization of the settler—discussed in Chapter One) is immediately obvious in the artistic choices that are made. In a single mode, either Indigenous peoples and cultures are entirely absent, or their presence is included and then erased, or elements of their culture are extracted (stolen) and used for settler identity construction in ways that deny their original cultural meanings. Techniques of absencing and erasure at this surface level are numerous within the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, as my analyses in the coming chapters will illuminate.

The fourth column in the chart situates the multimodal spectacle in relationship to Walter Mignolo's assertion that decolonial activity can only occur successfully when both content and terms are addressed. In applying his words to the multimodal spectacle, "content" thus refers to

⁵³ Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 9. Further discussed in Chapter One of this dissertation.

what is seen and heard in the spectacle, while “terms” refers to the reality which that content (mis)represents, as well as the underlying ideologies structuring the choices that go into selecting and arranging the content.

The fifth column aligns this work of multimodal spectacle analysis with Glen Coulthard’s politics of recognition, as I have discussed extensively in the preceding sections of this chapter. In a single mode, (as presented in the first row), if there is absence, I term this “lack of recognition.” However, as mentioned above, the lack of Indigenous presence is often more drastic than absence in that it often involves actual erasure or absencing, that is, the purposeful (or perhaps, occasionally, inadvertent) omission of Indigenous presence from the event. Beyond erasure, or lack of recognition, where there is inclusion or diversity in single or multiple modes, in the artistic modes here discussed, mere recognition may look like incorporating and appropriating Indigenous art or music in ways that limit or destitute that art; and it may also be evident in how that art (whether musical, textual, or visual) is arranged, and the transitions that are used to feature it. For a specific example of this, see the techniques that are used to animate the totem pole images in the second scene of the cultural portion, “Sacred Grove,” (discussed in Chapter Four). Like the earlier discussion expressed, moving beyond the politics of recognition is a move toward acknowledging Indigenous resurgence.

The sixth column situates all of this work in relationship to Dylan Robinson’s analyses of intercultural artistic collaborations, or what he terms “inclusionary music.” Borrowing the concepts from his analysis and applying them to a multimodal context illuminates the problems of “content vs. terms” within performance spectacles. While Robinson’s analyses usually refer to how different musics interact when placed in combination, the descriptions he provides can be expanded to apply to multimodal productions as well, which he does in fact call for, stating

“similar consideration might be given to how extramusical choices – how musicians are positioned on stage, how musicians are attired, or how the performance is contextualized by program notes or in pre-concert talk articulate cultural and political meaning.”⁵⁴ Moving down through this column, and providing Robinson’s explanation for each set of terms, “colonizing impulse” describes a relationship between musics that is indicative of “assimilation...under the aegis of inclusion.”⁵⁵ In practice, this might look like the inclusion of Indigenous musicians or Indigenous musics within a performance, but overwhelming them or reducing them so that they more readily fit the rhythms and harmonies of the western music that they are being performed alongside.⁵⁶ To put that into a multimodal context, Robinson’s identification of a colonizing impulse summarizes what I have explained in the top row of the chart as the absence or erasure of Indigenous presence from a single mode being immediate or surface level evidence of coloniality. Inclusionary performance, on the other hand, makes some effort to center Indigenous creativity, but does so within the framework of settler colonialism (and this may be evident in single modes, or in relationship between modes as Rows 2 and 3 of the framework indicate). “Agonistic dialogue” is essentially the opposite of the “colonizing impulse.” When musics are presented in “agonistic dialogue,” difference is not erased or assimilated, but made “audible.”⁵⁷ As Mohawk cellist Dawn Avery writes, drawing from Leroy Little Bear’s phrasing, such a perceived clash of musics represent these “jagged worlds colliding.”⁵⁸ Finally, in what Robinson

⁵⁴ Robinson, “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics,” 235.

⁵⁵ Robinson, “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics,” 246.

⁵⁶ See, for instance, Robinson’s discussion of the Tafelmusik production *The Four Seasons Mosaic*, in his chapter “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics,” 240-243.

⁵⁷ Robinson, “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics,” 224.

⁵⁸ Robinson, “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics,” 224. Dawn Ieriho-Kwats Avery, “Tékeni - Two Worlds, Many Borders: A Look at Classical Native Music through Indigenous Eyes,” *MUSICultures* 39, no. 1 (2012), 133; Leroy Little Bear, “Jagged Worldviews Colliding,” in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, ed. Marie Ann Battiste (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 85. Avery cited in Alexa Woloshyn, “Reclaiming the ‘Contemporary’ in Indigeneity: The Musical Practices of Cris Derksen and Jeremy Dutcher,” *Contemporary Music Review* 39, no. 2 (2020): 206–30.

terms “non-performative reconciliation” artistic endeavors give more agency to Indigenous artists, and appear to embody reconciliatory relationships through collaboration between Indigenous peoples and settler peoples, but as Robinson’s experiences of such events explains, these often do little to affect practical and political reconciliation, and in fact, can often take their place through making audiences feel as though reconciliation has occurred.

Now that I have briefly explained each of the columns, I will highlight four of the rows in the analytic framework which I think are the most significant for the present analysis. Row 2 in Table 2.1 is based on the argument, explained in the earlier portion of this chapter, that mere inclusion via the presence of, or at least, reference to Indigenous creators and their cultures, as well as the presence of other minoritized peoples and their cultures does not sufficiently challenge the settler status quo to contribute to decolonization. Rather, such inclusion maintains the status quo by presenting changes in content in place of changes in terms. Examples of such practices are present frequently in the three case studies I analyze in this dissertation. As I argue in those chapters, where efforts that appear to offer diversity and inclusion are evident, the change that we are witnessing is primarily one of content. Because it is content alone that is changing, and not the terms on which that content is being negotiated, these efforts are not decolonial, but can actually contribute to reinscribing colonial ideals.

The fourth row highlights the fact that disjuncture between multiple modes is not always indicative of coloniality, but may be indicative of Indigenous resurgence. This row requires particular nuance of interpretation since it could be easily concluded that the frame of reference for perceiving this disjuncture reinforces settler terms. However, if the terms of our evaluation of the situation are not settler colonial, but Indigenous, disjuncture here could be perceived as having been caused by the presence of settler colonial ideas. In order to avoid holding to a

Western evaluative standard—i.e. that Indigenous resurgence is only portrayed as departure from a norm and that that is what creates a disjuncture, in some of the analytic case studies presented here I also aim to show content of a European origin as that which causes the disjuncture. Additionally, disjunctures in this context are not necessarily always problematic, but may be indicative that truth-telling and agonistic dialogue (from Robinson) are taking place.⁵⁹

Row 5 addresses disjuncture between spectacle and reality. This kind of disjuncture arises when spectacles do not tell the truth about history or reality. Content and terms are at odds, not necessarily because of Indigenous resurgence, but because inclusion is happening in a way that does not address underlying logics or broader social concerns. That is, like MacAloon suggested, the peaceful images seen in the spectacles are mere illusions which don't address social injustices that are occurring outside the Games.

The final row envisions what I argue the spectacle could look like if it were more compellingly working towards a decolonized future. Row 6 is really an expansion of Row 4 in that it applies the concepts visible within a spectacle to broader circumstances. Rather than a disjuncture between spectacle and reality, the spectacle amplifies or illustrates the truth of the reality it attempts to rehearse and portray. Much like Robinson's call for truth telling, this might result in "agonistic dialogue," which, rather than smoothing over conflict or disparate worldviews and foregrounding relational harmony through metaphoric musical harmony, would "make audible the rough edges of difference."⁶⁰

Multimodal spectacles which take an anti-colonial position into consideration thus operate on terms not defined by the Eurocentric colonial view, but foster engagement across difference that is informed not by a politics of recognition, as Coulthard warns, but which honors the

⁵⁹ For this clarification, I am indebted to my supervisor, Lori Burns.

⁶⁰ Robinson, "Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics," 224.

presence and resurgence of the different groups who are collaborating on the event. Throughout the analyses that follow, although I focus on the ways in which this is not happening in the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony, I occasionally, and more fully in the concluding chapter, point to another spectacle which I observe as beginning to embody some of this artistic change. In what I term the process of inversion, I note that the Opening Ceremony of the PanAm games in Toronto in 2015, organized their story not around a Eurocentric frame, but around the framework of a powwow. Admittedly, depending on who was involved in organizing the event, and how the use of powwow was arranged, this could be read as the appropriation of an Indigenous festival for the purpose of defining a national identity, as we see in other instances of appropriation. However, in the absence of some of the nationalistic propaganda and rhetoric that clouded the Vancouver 2010 games (as my analysis in the coming chapters investigates), this event could also be read as the opposite—that is, diversity is not being promoted or celebrated for the sake of defining and celebrating Canada, but celebrating that diversity for its own sake. These inclusions of diversity are not mere “recognitions” by a central, hierarchical culture, but the self-determined participation and celebration of the unique cultures represented. The terms of engagement are no longer defined by a Eurocentric/colonial/White frame, but are built around an Indigenous one. This, I argue, is the kind of change of terms that Mignolo advocates for and that could lead to a decolonized future.

In proposing the integration of anti-colonial values and multimodal analysis through this analytic framework, I argue that assessing the impacts of settler colonialism, or identifying elements of settler-colonialism within the individual and combined artistic modes of an event helps to reveal the various layers in which coloniality operates in a society beyond just the artistic realm. In some ways my framework echoes the work of Pierre Bourdieu and George

Gerbner who identified the concept of symbolic violence—i.e. that violence or absence enacted within an artistic presentation (such as a TV show) symbolizes the occurrence of violence in the real world. As Gerbner stated, “representation in the fictional world signifies social existence; absence means symbolic annihilation.”⁶¹ My research, however, and the anti-colonial positioning that I have embraced within this dissertation, moves beyond framing absence as merely symbolic. Drawing from the work of Patrick Wolfe who rejects the qualifying adjective “cultural” for genocide and argues that cultural genocide is genocide, I affirm that symbolic annihilation is annihilation. Similarly then, although I use the term “symbolic” here to provide a level of distinction between what is immediately obvious at the surface, and what is inherent structural systems, in no way am I trying to diminish the gravity and danger of colonialism, rather, I affirm that symbolic coloniality is colonialism, and that absence is not just symbolic annihilation, it is one of the tools used to justify settler colonialism and achieve its end—the elimination of the native. Paul Litt writes,

The settlerium’s self-serving use of symbolic borrowings from the indigenium goes hand-in-hand with the material devastation it has inflicted upon it. In this context, appropriation adds insult to injury. Having already stolen the indigenium’s lands, the settlerium then steals its lineage. Its attempts to naturalize its presence on the land deflect attention from the indigenium’s chronological precedence, victimization, continuing presence, and rightful claims.⁶²

With these factors in mind, it is beyond expedient that scholars and artists critique the ways in which spectacles and other productions rehearse and perform the structural ideologies of injustice.

⁶¹ George Gerbner, “Violence in Television Drama: Trends and Symbolic Functions” in *Television and Social Behaviour: Reports and Papers*, Vol 1, edited by George A. Comstock and Eli A Rubinstein, (US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1972), 44.

⁶² Paul Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory and Canadian Cultural Nationalism,” *Settler Colonial Studies*, May 30, 2023, 4.

In conclusion, the analytic framework I propose here acknowledges the multimodal nature of contemporary artistic productions (such as the Olympic opening ceremonies), and advocates for an understanding of the interaction of these modes not necessarily as symbolic of the interactions of various ethnic groups (as Robinson's work has already done) but rather as revelatory of the need to address the implications of settler colonialism at various levels of depth.

Having provided a detailed description of each column, and the most relevant rows of the chart, I summarise my own main contributions here, by expanding on how I understand surface, symbolic, and structural coloniality (the third column of Table 2.1). Based on how Robinson, Coulthard, and Mignolo discuss the dangers of appropriation and inclusion, I describe surface level coloniality as that which is immediately evident—the absence or erasure of Indigenous presence from a single aesthetic mode. In the present context of analysing visual, textual, and musical modes, this surface level coloniality can be identified when Indigenous presence is intentionally or unintentionally omitted. I follow Veracini who asserts that Indigenous erasure is the ultimate goal of settler colonialism.⁶³ Within artistic productions such as the one presently under discussion, I observe erasure as a lack of Indigenous participation, a white-washing of space or peoples, the creation of a Eurocentric soundscape, or a theft or promotion of Indigenous materials without reference to the peoples themselves, and without understanding of the meaning of the pieces from their original context. As the following analytic chapters will demonstrate, I argue that all four of these techniques are present in the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games.

Symbolic coloniality, I argue, is that which becomes obvious through investigation of the relationship of multiple aesthetic modes. It is a disjuncture between these modes that alerts our

⁶³ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, 101.

attention to a conflict between the narrative we see in one mode and the narrative we hear or read in another mode. This lack of consistency between the narratives presented reveals that decolonization has not completely taken hold; at some level, coloniality is still at work. In identifying the work of coloniality at this level, there will be a mixture of presence and absence. Although Indigenous peoples, or their art or music may be present, if it is forced to fit within a Eurocentric frame, losing some of its nuance, meaning, and original contextual value (as both Robinson and Tara Browner would affirm), then these artistic interactions are symbolically repeating the experience of Indigenous peoples who are forced to abide by the rules of the settler colonial state.⁶⁴ In the examples I will discuss in the upcoming analytic chapters, this inter-modal conflict symbolizes an even greater conflict—the disjuncture between what we celebrate as Canada’s national identity—our self-proclaimed peaceful, inclusionary, diverse, multicultural society, and the realities that many people face in their lived experience on this (occupied) land. To put it in Mignolo’s words, there is thus a disjuncture between the content (which appears to be inclusive) and the terms (which continue to be exclusionary), or more specifically, between content which appears to be reconciliatory and anti-colonial, and terms which are still blatantly oppressive to Indigenous peoples through holding to settler colonial ideals.

This leads us to the final layer of coloniality—the structural layer. In this layer, I observe that there can be amplification between the three aesthetic modes, but disjuncture between their combined narrative and the stated intent of the Government and the Organizing committee. This is where structural coloniality is revealed. The modes themselves (both solely, and as a combination) at first appear inclusionary, but the narrative that they reproduce is deeply unjust. This is the focus of the final analytic chapter. Like the previous layer of symbolic coloniality

⁶⁴ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, Tara Browner, “Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890-1990,” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1995).

where disjuncture between modes merely symbolizes the disjuncture between spectacle and reality, this layer embodies that conflict outside of the spectacle. Such a conflict has become a central identifying factor of Canadian identity. As Indigenous author Lee Maracle explains “there is the myth of the nice Canadians, the just society; meanwhile, underneath is all this falsehood.”⁶⁵ Similarly, in critiquing the Canadian government, Richard Nimijean describes this type of disjuncture (although he doesn’t use that word) as “rhetoric-reality gaps.”⁶⁶ That is, there is a gap between the state’s political promises and what actually eventuates under that government’s leadership. We can see the structural level of coloniality as being evidence of this same gap, or as Maracle puts it, the distance between myth and reality: while the rhetoric of Canadian national identity is changing, the reality is not. Spectacles can claim that rhetoric and reality have changed, but both still inadvertently rehearse colonialism. This is where the incisive nature of Mignolo’s work is of most potency for the present study. As I have discussed in this chapter, Mignolo’s framework of the colonial matrix of power, exposes why rhetoric changes do not necessarily result in a decolonial reality. This is because, as Mignolo explains, although the rhetoric has changed, the parameters of the conversation have not, and it is still the colonial power which is defining the parameters of the conversation. In other words, it is not just the content of the conversation that must be changed, it is the parameters of the conversation (most basically, Western universality) that must be broken down to allow for decolonizing to be effective. A decolonized future then, is one in which the guiding structure or terms of engagement is no longer colonial, Eurocentric, Western, or white.

⁶⁵ Lee Maracle, *My Conversations with Canadians*, Essais; No. 4 (Toronto: BookThug, 2017), 50.

⁶⁶ Richard Nimijean, “Introduction: Is Canada Back? Brand Canada in a Turbulent World,” in *Canada, Nation Branding and Domestic Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), 4.

Employing the Framework

Now that I have provided a thorough explanation of how the analytic framework is developed, and how it integrates the ideas of various decolonial scholars and the multimodal discourse analysis that I pursue in this dissertation, I explain here how I envision this working in my upcoming chapters more thoroughly, and also how I foresee the framework serving as a useful tool in the development and analysis of multimodal spectacles and other artistic productions in the future.

In the analytic chapters to come, in addition to highlighting the ways that the settler colonial techniques of erasure and extraction are prevalent in the ceremony, and particularly the ways in which tropes of landscape and multiculturalism fuel the settler colonial narrative, I also reflect on whether the artistic choices being made are evidence of changing terms, or whether they are merely changes in content. As my analyses develop, I point to the ways in which the artistic arrangements embody Coulthard's politics of recognition and Robinson's politics of aesthetics, and whether disjuncture between the modes indicates a conflict between Indigenous resurgence and settler control at the level of content, or whether the disjuncture is a product of the inconsistencies in the stories that Canada is trying to curate about itself, while the content remains buried and unchanged. It is my hope that this analytic framework, and the level of thought and engagement it invites, will be of service to both scholars and creators as they analyze and produce works of art.

As settler artists and scholars of music aiming to participate in anti-colonial efforts, it is crucial that we pay attention to both content and structure. In Canadian production in particular, as the studies of Robinson and others have demonstrated, content is becoming more diverse, more inclusive, and featuring greater representations, which can lead to feelings of satisfaction

and reconciliation for audiences. However, as the analyses in the coming chapters demonstrate, increasing diversity and representation within rehearsals of national identity tend to do so in ways that leave the structure (settler colonialism/whiteness) intact, or in ways that actually contribute to reinforcing the structure. In these forthcoming analytic chapters, I seek to show what this content inclusion or arrangement of content reveals about the underlying structures that are in place. In addition to addressing these inclusions, I ask, how can we be attentive to Indigenous acts of refusal and resurgence? Further, if Indigenous activity that results in structural changes are refusal and resurgence, what are the responsibilities of settlers beyond relinquishing “land, power, privilege” (Tuck and Yang)? In the final portion of this chapter, I explore some further ideas which I argue will aid in the rejection of the settler positionality. To identify when the content is in opposition to the terms, requires close listening to our Indigenous hosts and minoritized neighbors, and a rejection of the settler colonial hungry positionality of listening and looking.

Embracing Decolonial Posture in Living, Thinking, and Musicking on Indigenous Land

In the analyses that follow, I observe evidence of colonialism through the erasure/extractive or absenting/appropriative processes which are used for the benefit of the settler colonial Canadian state and to the detriment of Indigenous flourishing. I argue that these erasure/extractive techniques are inherently self-serving, and that in order to follow the challenge laid out in this chapter by the anti-colonial scholars quoted herein (Mignolo, Coulthard, Robinson, and others) decolonization must involve more than a change in content but also a change in terms. Settlers must find a way of being that refuses the erasure/extractive principle of the settler colonial mindset and reject the settler-colonial positionality.

In continuing this study, and in my own life, I ask what does this entail for occupiers of Turtle Island seeking to live well amongst many neighbors? How might settlers reject their settler colonial positionality and engage differently? I write here not as one seeking state-based change, after all, Mignolo says that “decoloniality is not a state-led task.”⁶⁷ Rather, I offer these suggestions for myself and for other settlers who are invested in contributing to a decolonial future. These are the postures I have sought to carry with me as I complete the analyses in the coming chapters. I do not offer these as solutions, but as suggestions, which should be applied in particular contexts via relationship, since, as Lowman and Barker state, “decolonization is open ended and multiple, creating more and more different possibilities as it is pursued,” although some ideas and goals are shared across time and space.⁶⁸ In this section I explore ideas including attending to presencing as the counter to absencing and erasure, and then suggest self-giving love as the alternative to extraction. Both of these unite as choices which reject the settler positionality and offer the chance for settlers to engage differently—not on our own terms, or on terms dictated by a settler colonial ideology, but on a new set of terms, terms which are invested in the pursuit of honoring and attending to Indigenous peoples and the terms that they determine.

In this section I question what it might look like for settlers to invert the terms of our own engagement with our Indigenous hosts and our other neighbors. As my overview of settler colonialism in Chapter One expressed, the settler positionality, which has erasure as both means and end, and involves a mindset of extraction, can be rejected. Settlers can choose to operate on the land and in relation to their Indigenous hosts and neighbors in a new way, for instance, through choosing to operate on the land and in relationships as guests rather than as settler

⁶⁷ Mignolo, *Politics*, xi.

⁶⁸ Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada* (Black Point, Nova Scotia; Fernwood Publishing, 2015), 112.

colonizers. Based on the work of Ruth Koleszar-Green and others, operating as guests involves recognizing positionality, learning about Indigenous territory, and accepting responsibility in relationship to our Indigenous hosts and the land.⁶⁹ Lowman and Barker suggest allyship as an initial step in a move out of the settler position. They explain, “Ally is something you do—a kind of relationship and action you practice—not something you can claim to be.”⁷⁰ Settlers who are active participants in decolonization, Lowman and Barker continue, are participants in a different story “a story in which Settler people can become something more than merely colonizers, not by ignoring their status on the land, but by accepting, owning, and reshaping it.”⁷¹ This study serves as an initial step in accepting and owning my own status on the land, and encouraging others to do the same, but what might it look like to even further reject the erasure and extraction which characterizes the settler colonial mindset?

In addition to choosing not to engage as settlers, but as guests and allies, some scholars consider attention to presencing an important decolonial act. If settler colonialism has erasure as one of its goals, then to pursue decoloniality is to be attentive to acts of presencing. As mentioned in the Introductory Chapter, presencing is a word used both by Indigenous peoples and their settler allies to speak of Indigenous activity that functions contrary to the absencing and erasure that is the emphasis, and end goal, of settler colonialism. Sandrina de Finney, drawing from the work of Leanne Simpson, asserts that for Indigenous people, “acts of presence are integral to Indigenous resurgence.”⁷² As de Finney further explains, the activities of Indigenous women and girls that serve as acts of presence include “avoiding, protecting, contesting,

⁶⁹ Koleszar-Green, “What Is a Guest?” 174.

⁷⁰ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 116.

⁷¹ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 121.

⁷² Sandrina de Finney, “Under the Shadow of Empire: Indigenous Girls’ Presencing as Decolonizing Force,” *Girlhood Studies* 7, no. 1 (2014), 22.

laughing, hoping, dreaming, connecting, documenting, imagining, and challenging.”⁷³ Josephine Savarese also suggests that “presencing attributes social, political, and historical astuteness to Indigenous women and girl’s interpretations and daily actions.”⁷⁴ Lest this term simply become another cognate for recognition, let me clarify, that although it is not stated as explicit as this in Savarese’s article, she seems to imply that presencing is a word used to describe the activity and agency of Indigenous women and girls, while “attending to presencing” is the settler counterpart. Presence here is not construed as something which settlers grant, or which is important because of settler gaze, it is simply part of Indigenous resurgence. Settlers who are engaged in relinquishing and rejecting their own settler positionality then, are attentive to the presence of, and the presencing activities of, Indigenous peoples. Not only do settler guests choose not to actively engage in acts of absencing or erasure, we also continue to move beyond that to being attentive to and honoring Indigenous presence.

In addition to rejecting settler positionality by choosing to participate as guests on the land, and by being attentive to Indigenous presencing and resurgence, I argue that a positionality of love will enable settlers to reject the colonial practices of extraction. Building from the work of Daniel Chua, who suggests that self-giving love is the opposite of critique, I argue here that self-giving love is the opposite of extractive colonialism. In his 2022 keynote which was later published, Chua concluded with the idea that global musicology ought to be built from love, not just a “warm, fuzzy feeling” but a posture which “attends selflessly to the others’ interests.”⁷⁵ As Chua explains, such a posture involves relinquishing (a good anti-colonial word, as Tuck and Yang use it) the predetermined opinions, judgments, and goals we may have as we interact with

⁷³ De Finney, “Under the Shadow,” 23.

⁷⁴ Josephine L. Savarese, “Challenging Colonial Norms and Attending to Presencing in Stories of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women,” *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 29 (1) 2017, 170.

⁷⁵ Daniel K. L. Chua, “Global Musicology: A Keynote without a Key,” *Acta Musicologica* 94, no. 1 (2022): 124.

those whom we typically construe as other. I argue that the suggestions Chua makes may contribute to facilitating a change in terms that decoloniality is looking for. If the success of settler colonialism is predicated on the erasure of Indigenous peoples, and the extraction of their land and resources for the benefit of the settler colony, then anti-colonialism will do the opposite. Rather than erasure, there will be presencing (as discussed above). Rather than the extraction of land and resources for the benefit of the settler colony, we should look for and embody a posture of selflessly seeking to honor our Indigenous hosts and neighbors. The opposite of extracting resources for the sake of my own benefit is to give of myself for another's benefit. Thus, the opposite of colonial mindset of erasure and extraction is self-giving love. Seeking the good of another at a cost to yourself is the ultimate inversion of the extractive principles of colonialism. This could be the ultimate change in terms, as settlers relinquish the greed and hunger which is the foundation of our position on this land. Not the romantic attraction or mere passing sentimental affectionate feelings towards others, I define love in this section as "self-giving for the good of the other." It is in this way that I see love as being the change in terms that is required for decolonization to take place. Before discussing the broader implications of this concept, I first ground my definition in the work of feminist theorist bell hooks and discuss other conceptions of decolonial and/or anti-colonial love.

Love is not a concept that has been absent from conversations about decolonization and other social justice practices by any means. The phrases "decolonial love" and "anti-colonial love" are common in Indigenous activism, and other forms of social justice. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson explains that "the intense love of land, of family, and of our nations that

has always been the spine of Indigenous resistance.”⁷⁶ For Simpson, this also looks like, for Indigenous people, loving their cultures and ways of being as acts of “radical resurgence,” and doing those practices which they have been taught (by colonialism) to hate or, as Pierrot Ross-Tremblay writes, “commanded to forget.”⁷⁷ In contrast, Carolyn Urena defines colonial love as self-seeking, and argues that it participates in exoticizing and eroticizing the other.⁷⁸ Such colonial love, she goes on to explain, “fetishizes the beloved object and participates in the oppression of subjugation and difference.”⁷⁹ Decolonial love, on the other hand is invested in “rehabilitating the relation between self and other.”⁸⁰ In Shantelle Moreno’s study of love as resistance, she found that Indigenous and racialized peoples tended to frame “decolonial love as relational, describing how love is expressed through connection to the land, waters and sky. Additionally, many expressed love as a felt sense experienced between the self and others.”⁸¹ For Indigenous peoples then, love is an anti-colonial act as it foregrounds “interconnectedness and relationality.”⁸² In these contexts, love for their Indigenous cultures, families, and lands is what fuels and motivates Indigenous resistance and flourishing. For example, Leanne Simpson describes Glen Coulthard’s activism in this way: “The fire in these pages is founded upon and propelled by a tremendous love of land, love of people, and love of Dene intelligence.”⁸³ Decolonial love has also been theorized by Chela Sandoval who explains that for “Third world” thinkers and writers, love is about “‘breaking’ through whatever controls in order to find

⁷⁶ Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 9, cited in Shantelle Moreno, “Love as Resistance: Exploring Conceptualizations of Decolonial Love in Settler States,” *Girlhood Studies* 12, no. 3 (2019), 126.

⁷⁷ L Simpson, *As We Have*, 48. Pierrot Ross-Tremblay, *Thou Shalt Forget: Indigenous Sovereignty, Resistance and the Production of Cultural Oblivion in Canada* (London: University of London Press, 2019), 23.

⁷⁸ Carolyn Urena, “Loving from Below: Of (De)Colonial Love and Other Demons,” *Hypatia* 32, no. 1 (2017), 87.

⁷⁹ Urena, “Loving from Below,” 87.

⁸⁰ Urena, “Loving from Below,” 89.

⁸¹ Moreno, “Love as Resistance,” 124-125.

⁸² Moreno, “Love as Resistance,” 129.

⁸³ Simpson, *As We Have Always Done*, 65.

‘understanding and community.’”⁸⁴ Based on this short survey of literature, love is clearly an important aspect of Indigenous resistance and resurgence, but how might an understanding of love function for settlers as a means of changing the terms of engagement? How might an ethic of love facilitate the relinquishing of land, power, and privilege that is the essential settler responsibility in anti-colonial activity? In writing this section, I am not suggesting that settlers appropriate decolonial love from Indigenous contexts, rather, drawing from feminist theorist bell hooks, and musicologist Daniel Chua, I instead contemplate what particular qualities of love make it a useful ethic for settlers to counteract the extractive mindset of colonialism.

Feminist theorist bell hooks asserts that love is essential in all efforts of social justice.⁸⁵ In building a picture of how love contributes to social justice, hooks cites M. Scott Peck’s definition of love as “‘the will to extend one’s self for the purpose of nurturing one’s own or another’s spiritual growth.’”⁸⁶ “Spiritual growth,” hooks explains later, simply means the “core reality” of the individual.⁸⁷ To love then, is to give of one’s self for the spiritual growth, or we might say, the overall wholeness of another. I suggest that seeking the good or wholeness of another as a priority above one’s own selfish interests actively counters the settler mindset of extraction and can thus serve as an alternative position from which settlers can engage. hooks explains that love involves “care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication.”⁸⁸ These qualities describe in further detail how those involved in pursuits of social justice can contribute to loving and listening well. Drawing further from thinkers and writers such as Erich Fromm, Martin Luther King, and Thomas Merton, hooks asserts that “there

⁸⁴ Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, 139.

⁸⁵ bell hooks, *All about Love: New Visions*, 1st ed, (New York: William Morrow, 2000), xix.

⁸⁶ hooks, *All about Love*, 4. She names him but doesn’t cite him here.

⁸⁷ hooks, *All about Love*, 13.

⁸⁸ hooks, *All about Love*, 5.

is always an emphasis in their work on love as an active force that should lead us into greater communion with the world. In their work, loving practice is not aimed at simply giving an individual greater life satisfaction; it is extolled as the primary way we end domination and oppression.”⁸⁹ Love which moves us toward “greater communion” with the world will oppose erasure, and center presencing, and further enliven the reality of a decolonized future.

However, especially in the context of music and in relations of power, love can be a complex and dangerous concept. In addition to the racializing and eroticizing colonial love described by Carolyn Urena above, William Cheng reminds us that love can actually cause pain and hurt, especially the love of music. When love of music is viewed as a humanizing force, it participates in oppressive and racializing ideologies.⁹⁰ Cheng advocates that we should avoid seeing musical ability as humanizing, and his main premise is to love people above music.⁹¹ That is why, in this section, I have attempted to suggest that anti-colonial love enacted by settlers must involve self-giving for the purpose of contributing to the overall wholeness of Indigenous hosts. This can be further summarized in Koleszar-Green’s definition of the settler positionality which is one in which the settlers “centre themselves,” while the guest positionality is invested in “centering the community” (presumably the Indigenous community the now guest relates to).⁹² Love, by these definitions, and in combination with the guest positionality, is effective in aiding our anti-colonial pursuits.

Love as a positionality serves as an anti-extractive and anti-colonial means of engagement. Based on the definition discussed above, love is anti-extractive in that instead of taking

⁸⁹ hooks, *All about Love*, 76.

⁹⁰ Cheng, *Loving Music til it Hurts*, 13-15.

⁹¹ Cheng, *Loving Music til it Hurts*, 5.

⁹² Koleszar-Green, “What Is a Guest?” 174. The community she refers to here is the Indigenous community on whose land the settler is guest.

something from the individual or the community for its own benefit, it seeks to give of itself for the benefit of that individual or community. hooks affirms that while in an “ethic of domination,” “greed and exploitation become the norm” “domination cannot exist in any social situation where a love ethic prevails.”⁹³

In this section, the primary theme has been one of self-giving, or of extending oneself in order to serve another. This has direct implications for music listening and is related to the concept of aesthetic surrender which Ryan Shuvera suggests as an alternative to the hungry listening positionality. Dylan Robinson suggested that the primary settler listening positionality can be summarized as “hungry listening,” which he defined as based on settler greed.⁹⁴ Robinson then also suggested that an alternative is a critical listening positionality that slows the pace and shifts the intent of listening, and focusses on attentiveness to interpersonal and other relational listening that privileges feeling.⁹⁵ This basically constitutes what he further describes as “anticolonial listening,” which is slow, relational, situated, avoids consumption and certainty, and emphasizes wonder.⁹⁶ Robinson also suggests a position of “guest listening” may be beneficial, to approach listening through respect for the Indigenous protocols that visitors follow as guests on a territory.⁹⁷ As I put Robinson’s work in dialogue with a variety of other scholars, and process through my own path of decolonizing listening and research, I have sought for this dissertation to be an exercise and example of teaching ourselves (as settlers) to listen (and to hear) in a different way. In opposition to hungry or extractive listening, Shuvera posits that settlers can experience a moment of encounter in listening to Indigenous music that will help

⁹³ hooks, *All about Love*, 105, 98.

⁹⁴ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 48-49.

⁹⁵ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 52.

⁹⁶ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 53.

⁹⁷ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 53.

change their posture to surrender, and that further encounters with Indigenous musics will serve to deepen this surrender. Shuvera explains that this process “requires settlers to learn how to participate in new worlds opened and led by various Indigenous peoples and nations.”⁹⁸ Anti-extractive listening, in Shuvera’s examples, results in “aesthetic surrender.”⁹⁹ Aesthetic surrender this also contributes to the “surrender of settler colonial mentalities.”¹⁰⁰ Although he does not state so explicitly, Shuvera’s concept of aesthetic surrender echoes the positionality of love that I have explicated here: love begins at laying down one’s self for the sake of others. It is the ultimate surrender. Instead of asking, as hungry listening would, how can this be of value for me? Or, how can this serve my needs? Anti-colonial listening rooted in love rather than in hunger means that we listen closely to the needs of others, to how we can serve them, seeking to understand, when we are invited to, how their musics and cultures are of value to them, and maintaining respectful distance when that is required.

Conclusions of Chapter Two

In conclusion, the analytic framework that I develop in this chapter, arises out of a deep consideration of engaging with spectacles through the decolonial work of Glen Coulthard, Dylan Robinson, Walter D. Mignolo and others. In attending to the concerns that multiple scholars raise—that practices of diversity, inclusion, recognition, and multiculturalism do little to actually contribute to the freedom and flourishing of Indigenous communities and of minoritized individuals in Canada—I pursue Coulthard’s and Robinson’s suggestions in alignment with Mignolo’s warnings in order to make clear that we must not mistake content changes for structural changes. To facilitate this process, I propose this analytic framework which aligns the

⁹⁸ Ryan Shuvera, “Sounding Unsettlement: Rethinking Settler States of Mind and Re(-)Cognition through Scenes of Cross-Cultural Listening,” (PhD Dissertation, London, Ontario, University of Western Ontario, 2020), 7.

⁹⁹ Shuvera, “Sounding Unsettlement,” 3.

¹⁰⁰ Shuvera, “Sounding Unsettlement,” 180.

work of those three scholars with the multimodal discourse analysis which I employ in this dissertation.

Additionally, focusing on the qualities of love as a counter-hegemonic positionality directly addresses the erasing and extractive tendencies that settler colonialism promotes. Love, when defined as seeking the good of another, operates as the ultimate change in terms, moving settlers from seeking their own good through the promotion of Western ways as universal, to a positionality which favors the freedom and flourishing of those they have previously confined to a state of ‘otherness.’ Listening and looking from a position of love thus aims to value and honor those hosts and neighbors on their own (rather than on settler) terms. It contradicts the politics of inclusion and recognition in that these practices are no longer based on maintaining power and control, but in the very relinquishing of that power and control. While such love may not be evident at the level of state-based or nation-to-nation relationships, it will begin, at an interpersonal level, to facilitate the types of engagement which decolonial healing pursues. As Mignolo asserts, “healing colonial wounds requires regaining destituted dignity and restoring respect for people’s own gnoseological and aesthetic principles of knowing, knowledge, and ways of being.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Mignolo, *Politics*, 24.

Chapter Three – Rehearsing Northern Whiteness

Introduction

As any Canadian, or even visitor to Canada will tell you, one of this country's most defining features is its vast landscape and often harsh weather. Noted, even famously by Voltaire for simply being "a few acres of snow," proponents of national identity often lean heavily into the land's characteristic weather, referring to the country as "The Great White North" or even just "the North"¹ (a title which further serves to distinguish the nation from its larger neighbor to the south). However, the racial and exclusionary results of this emphasis are often overlooked. Tied up with the emphasis on white/North/winter is a reputation for success at winter sport, most notably hockey, of course, which was celebrated and promoted through the Vancouver 2010 games and was fulfilled when Canada won the men's ice hockey gold medal against the US.² This identity mythology became the grounding point for marketing Canada's approach to its participation in the Sochi 2014 Games with the slogan "We Are Winter."³ Given the ubiquity of this feature of Canada's national identity, it is no surprise that the first segment of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 was entitled "Hymn to the North." In this chapter, I analyze and critique the first scene of the cultural portion and reveal some of the ways in which the portrayal of elements of national identity reinforce settler colonialism. In employing the multimodal analysis, I first investigate what each mode communicates independently before analysing how the interaction of the modes affirms or contradicts the overall narrative or constructive aim of the ceremony. Where contradictions, or to use Nicholas

¹ See for instance, the slogan which identifies Canada's only prominent basketball team: "We the North."

² Linking winter sport and whiteness in Canada more thoroughly, Helene Vosters refers to Canadian white-settler nationalism as "seductive and 'percepticidal' blizzards" (Helene Vosters, "Sochi Olympics 2014, Canadian Truth and Reconciliation, and the Haunting Ghouls of Canadian Nationalism," in *Performance Studies in Canada*, ed. Marlis Schweitzer and Laura Levin (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 184.

³ Vosters, "Sochi Olympics 2014," 184.

Cook's term, disjunctures, exist, I argue that these contradictions provide important points of entry for critique and concern. The decolonial critique which forms the foundation for this dissertation highlights the ways in which the celebrated characteristics of Canada's national identity serve to reinforce settler colonial activity and ideology.

In this chapter, I argue that the logic of settler colonialism is evident in the reliance on the peaceable kingdom myth—noticeable through the literal and figurative white-washing of the representation of first contact between Indigenous peoples and settlers, and through the appeal to Canada as being welcoming to refugees. Additionally, I note that although there are characters physically present on stage, the music that is used contributes to an aural environment which implies emptiness, and the settler relationship to that land. My multimodal discourse analysis here attends specifically to the texts which are used in the ceremony (two quotes from famous Canadians) as well as the title of the scene and descriptions of its intentions from the media guide. In the visual mode, I make note of the costuming choices and overall staging and design. Musically, I make reference to how the instrumentation, generic and arrangement choices reinforce the settler colonial absencing and erasure of difference, while centering whiteness. Before beginning the analysis of each mode independently, I offer a summary description of the scene as a whole, and its context within the Opening Ceremony. After the separate analyses, I draw conclusions about their combined interactions, noting any overall disjunctures, and how the narratives being constructed serve to rehearse the ideologies of white-settler nationalism. Finally, I frame these observations around the surface/structure dichotomy that served as the basis for the analytic framework developed in the preceding chapter. Drawing on those critiques of multiculturalism and inclusion I conclude that while at the surface and symbolic level of portrayal Canada appears to be making strides in the direction of representational justice, these

efforts are contradicted by the terms which manage and control the content of the representations. In addition to these observations of how the artistic choices presented in this scene communicate settler colonial values, I align my interpretations here with the concept of specters and haunting which serves as a useful explanatory mechanism for discussing how the arrangement of semiotic resources participates in erasure.

Spectrality, or the haunting of the present by ghosts, is a common theme that emerges in two other doctoral dissertations on Canadian Olympics. Although Estee Fresco and Natalie Baloy use different terms to explain the phenomenon, (ghostly haunting and spectrality, respectively) both draw on Emilie Cameron, Avery Gordon, and Jacques Derrida for the origin of the concept. There is a sort of double meaning to the concept in that it can be used to refer both to how Indigenous peoples are forced (or, spectralized) to occupy a place of haunting (i.e. they are rendered ghosts through processes of erasure) and it can also refer to their agency in haunting the present. Overarching within both of these is the idea that the results of oppression haunt the present—and this is how Avery Gordon uses the term. She explains: “haunting is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life, especially when they are supposedly over and done with (slavery, for instance).”⁴ Gordon continues, “Haunting and the appearance of specters or ghosts is one way, I tried to suggest, we are notified that what’s been concealed is very much alive and present.”⁵ As a point of contrast, Emilie Cameron problematizes the use of this concept in settler-Indigenous relations, arguing that it “reinscribes colonial power relations.”⁶ while in some contexts, attention to the

⁴ Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, New University of Minnesota Press ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), xvi.

⁵ Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, xvi.

⁶ Emilie Cameron, “Indigenous Spectrality and the Politics of Postcolonial Ghost Stories: Cultural Geographies,” *Cultural Geographies* 15, no. 3 (July 2008), 383.

specters of Aboriginality can be seen as a recognition of Indigenous presence, Cameron argues that actually, the emphasis on ghost stories and Indigenous presence as merely haunting the present is “a longstanding practice of relegating Aboriginality to the immaterial and spectral past.”⁷ Lorenzo Veracini, scholar of settler colonial theory, notices this characteristic of settler colonialism too. He explains,

for settlers, indigenous people are ghosts, even luminous spheres; they are spirits without a body. In settler renditions, indigenous people frequently appear elusive, insubstantial, apathetic, aimless, and impermanent: a relationship, even a negative one, is impossible, and everything indigenous can thus be reduced to reminiscence (a conceptual move, indeed a narrative transfer that restricts an actually existing indigenous presence to temporary and instable [sic] pockets of past surrounded by future).⁸

Following Veracini’s and Cameron’s framing of reducing Indigenous peoples to ghostly presence as a colonizing act, as I deploy the use of this concept in this chapter, I argue that the ghostly presences in this scene (noticeably the sounds which are presented as echoes and the white-washed costumes) are evidence of the settler colonial practice of erasure. Before moving on to that analysis, I further summarise Baloy’s and Fresco’s employment of hauntology.

In her analysis of how Vancouver hosted and responded to the 2010 Olympic Games, Natalie Baloy argues that “Aboriginal alterity and Indigeneity function almost holographically: apparent and visible in some contexts, but erased or minimized in others.”⁹ In her study of Indigenous presence, absence, and alterity in several Vancouver spaces and events, she concludes that Indigeneity “seems to disappear and return, thereby haunting contemporary and social relations.”¹⁰ Similarly, Estee Fresco observes that all three of Canada’s Olympics,

⁷ Emilie Cameron, “Indigenous Spectrality”, 388.

⁸ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 86.

⁹ Natalie J. K. Baloy, “Spectacle, Spectrality, and the Everyday: Settler Colonialism, Aboriginal Alterity, and Inclusion in Vancouver” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2014), 27.

¹⁰ Baloy, “Spectacle,” 27.

although they presented slightly different levels of detail in their narratives about the nation's history, were "haunted" by the facts of that history. She writes, "I use haunting theory to show how knowledge about Indigenous peoples' cultures, that were formally excluded from official narratives, were not completely erased."¹¹ Fresco's essential argument is that the commodities surrounded each of the games were haunted by ideas of Canada's past/history, and she is thus using the term in the positive sense—that is, that Indigenous peoples have not been erased and are present albeit via haunting. This is the kind of usage, however, that Cameron critiqued, which is why in this chapter, I focus on spectralizing as a tool of erasure enforced by settler colonialism.

Baloy's explanation of how spectralization occurs is worth consideration for the nuance she provides and for the implications this has for the present conversation. Baloy writes, "sometimes attention to Aboriginal racial alterity eclipses Indigenous political distinction, rendering Indigeneity invisible. Other times, efforts toward universalized, liberal forms of equality erase Aboriginal alterities and Indigenous distinctions. Sometimes Indigeneity is called forth and summoned – through spectacles of recognition, for instance – and then retreats from view as the event continues or attention switches to other concerns."¹² In expressing these distinctions, Baloy demonstrates that it is not enough to merely consider Indigenous presence or absence, but to look for the ways that Indigenous presence is erased, spectralized, or absented through political treatment, or in spectacles, and how that treatment serves the goals of settler colonialism. I extend Baloy's analytic analogy that settler colonialism "renders Aboriginality a spectre" and show how this is achieved artistically in this portion of the Opening Ceremony

¹¹ Estee Fresco, "Impassioned Objects And Seething Absences: The Olympics In Canada, National Identity and Consumer Culture" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 2015), 74.

¹² Baloy, "Spectacle," 27.

through costume and design choices, and the musical arrangement. Although Baloy's study does engage with the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, her focus is on audience responses to the ceremony and the associated events rather than a close analysis of the cultural portion itself. My interpretation differs slightly from Baloy's, in that sometimes she seems to place agency on Indigeneity as haunting the present, in spite of the role of settler colonialism, while at other times, it is emphasized that Indigenous peoples are forced to occupy that position by the controlling impetus of settler colonialism, that is, that the agency is on the settlers. As she states: "I understand Vancouver's spaces to be haunted, not necessarily by supernatural beings, but by processes of dispossession that have displaced local Coast Salish peoples and their histories from common urban narratives and imaginaries."¹³ Whether the agency is emphasized as being on settlers for relegating Indigenous people to the past, or whether the agency is assumed to be on the Indigenous people for refusing that relegation and thus haunting the present, I take the former view, since in my experience, Indigenous people are present in the present, and not just as ghostly apparitions of the past. That is, I view this as Indigenous peoples not just present via haunting, but also actively present. Where there is haunting, it is an act of resistance and resurgence, but also one that is a result of the erasure inflicted by settler colonialism. To view Indigenous peoples as only present through haunting is to deny their continued existence and presence; whereas to acknowledge both their contemporaneous presence and their agency in haunting centers Indigenous presence while acknowledging the impacts of settler colonialism.

The language of haunting is useful metaphor for the present chapter, because, I argue, of how the presence of Indigeneity, and other examples of diversity are treated within the context of

¹³ Baloy, "Spectacle," 28.

this scene.¹⁴ As will become clear in later portions of this chapter, I argue that although difference and diversity are acknowledged in this scene from the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, the artistic choices contribute to the “spectralization” (to use Baloy’s term), of Indigenous identity, and diversity: the characters that are portrayed and their vibrant identities and culture are reduced to mere apparitions and resigned to the past.¹⁵

This scene combines music by Alberta-born composer, Dave Pierce, with numerous visual and verbal cues, including First Nations art and quotes from famous Canadians. When these media are understood in relationship to one another, I argue that the narrative that is communicated here rehearses problematic patterns of hegemony, settler colonialism, and Eurocentrism. In particular, I suggest that the inclusion of Joe Schlesinger’s quote about coming to Canada as a refugee contributes to the reinforcing of the myth of the Peaceable Kingdom, and thus supports the settler colonial goals of creating an idealized national identity. In the context of the other artistic elements in this portion of the ceremony however, Schlesinger’s words are contradicted by the stark, unfamiliar environment that the audience sees and hears. This disjuncture in the narrative breaks open an avenue for critique.

By situating this study in a framework of decoloniality and drawing on analytical techniques from multimodality, I will show how the relationship between Pierce’s music, the on-stage action, the narration and other textual materials creates a “disjuncture” which idealizes national identity at the expense of the peoples that this cultural sequence proposed to honor—both the First Nations hosts and refugees who have chosen to make Canada home.

¹⁴ Baloy develops her concept of haunting with a nod to the work of Derrida (who coined the term hauntology). She also draws on the work of Emilie Cameron and Avery Gordon on the relationship between Indigenous haunting and the presence of those ghosts in colonialism.

¹⁵ As Baloy also notes, this concept is not to be confused or correlated with Indigenous concepts of the presence of their ancestors, which for the Musqueam for instance, “have a contemporary presence that requires certain protocols” (Baloy, 27). For the purposes of the present study, I am specifically interested in the ways in which settler colonialism forces Indigenous peoples, and non-settler immigrants, to occupy a ghostly past.

Description of Opening Scene

The section of the Opening Ceremony I will review in this chapter is entitled, “Hymn to the North.”¹⁶ This is one small scene within the larger cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony entitled “Landscape of a Dream.” According to VANOC, in the cultural portion, “the audience was transported across Canada, from the Prairies to the peaks of mountaintops, the depths of the ocean, and through its varied seasons.”¹⁷ The cultural portion begins and ends with winter soundscapes and visuals, starting geographically in Canada’s North (which, as we will see later in this chapter, stands in as representative of the whole country), travelling across a wide swath of the landscape in the middle scenes, before returning to the West Coast with a scene of mountain winter sports.¹⁸ In each of the scene analyses featured in this and the successive chapters, before discussing each semiotic mode separately, I will give a description of the scene as a whole. Some scenes in the cultural portion feature more transitional material than the others do, I will clarify that in the appropriate sections.

By this point in the ceremony, the athletes have been welcomed by the Four Host First Nations (FHFN) and are seated in the stadium to enjoy the rest of the ceremony.¹⁹ After the rhythmic drive and pop repetition of “Bang the Drum” fades away, singers Nelly Furtado and Bryan Adams descend into the stage and the scene darkens. Apart from the noise of the crowd,

¹⁶ “Complete Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony – Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics” <https://youtu.be/MxZpUueDAvc>. This scene: 1:31:14-1:38:37. Arguably, the scene continues to 1:40:23, which is when scene two – “Sacred Grove” starts. But I consider the approx. 2 minutes between the two as transitional material between the two scenes.

¹⁷ Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, (VANOC.) “Staging the Olympic Winter Games Knowledge Report” September 2010, 16. Accessed April 22, 2019. <https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reports/Official%20Past%20Games%20Reports/Winter/EN/Staging-the-Games.pdf>

¹⁸ In this dissertation I only discuss the first three scenes in detail, but return briefly to the remaining scenes in the conclusion.

¹⁹ “Complete Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony – Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics” April 11, 2010, video clip, accessed April 22, 2019, YouTube, <https://youtu.be/MxZpUueDAvc>. The portion I discuss in this chapter begins at 1:31:26 and ends at 1:38:28.

the only sounds are those of wind howling as if the audience is being invited to imagine a barren landscape (1:31:13–1:31:20). The main stage floor is covered in a projection that makes it appear like ice and snow. As the light returns, a recording of Donald Sutherland narrating a poem entitled “Winter” by François-Xavier Garneau is played (1:31:20), and the orchestra begins a soft accompaniment. As Sutherland completes the poem, the wind sound effects get louder, and imitation snowflakes start to fall accompanied by the sound of chimes (1:31:42). A cloaked figure with a staff enters the stage, and the combination of sparse percussion and synthesized chords continues to evoke a stark, wintry environment. Hints of melodic material can be heard, and fragmented sounds from a variety of instruments decorate the aural space. Vocalizations and chanting are also included (e.g. 1:32:01–1:32:06). A large collection of actors joins the main figure on stage. They wander around in groups, each dressed in a variety of costumes which are stark white. The actors greet each other, either waving or shaking hands (e.g. 1:33:49–1:34:20). The strings are added to the sustained chords and a melody begins as Sutherland’s voice is heard again as he reads a quote from Joe Schlesinger, “I came to Canada as a refugee. Forty-five years later, for me, Canada is a refuge still” (1:33:13–1:33:29). The actors on stage continue to wander around and as they do, the accompaniment grows louder with the addition of the brass.

Musically, the same phrase is repeated twice—a simple, hymn-like melody in a major key evoking hope and joy. The wind sounds continue with the melody and then there is a key change. As the melody plays, the people, all dressed in white, with costumes that seem to be representing a variety of different styles and thus perhaps cultures, continue to wave and smile and explore.

An abrupt forte chord brings the melody to an end, and then only the brass return. The background chords become more somber in mood, and the people gather together in huddles. The music is synchronized to the action as the lead actor strikes the stage floor with his staff, and

circular banners descend from the ceiling. The previous hopeful melody returns in the background. The musical texture rapidly changes, switching between triumphant brass fanfare and subtle strings and percussion, while images of the Northern Lights are projected onto the fabric screens hung in the center of the stadium. The melody now absent, seemingly independent chords accompany the appearance of constellations in the shapes of animals outlined in the “sky” above the performers. A large, inflated bear rises from the stage floor and the music becomes more percussive, with claps and drumbeats, at first anticipatory and then celebratory. The actors on stage, no long huddled together in fear or confusion, wander towards the bear at one end of the stage, gazing at it in awe (1:36:20–1:37:15). Their costumes begin to light up, and there is no music, except for the twinkling chimes which match the twinkling lights. A sudden loud beat initiates the breaking up of the ice which is projected on the stage floor. Initially the only sounds are the effects of the ice breaking up and the projected water rushing past, but soon the music returns, pointing towards danger through the use of loud with brass blasts punctuating the underlying strings which alternate back and forth in minor seconds. The music becomes more percussive, and the melody is left unresolved as the ice breaks apart and the actors run offstage. The characters have parted ways and a transitional scene begins which portrays the West Coast through images of the ocean, and features “Aboriginal art whales” and “schools of salmon.”²⁰ The official program of the Opening Ceremony explains the context of the art used in this portion of the scene, noting that “Salish peoples boast a bold and distinctive artistic style that relies...more on strong geometric shapes and abstract forms...though there has been much artistic cross-fertilization in recent years between the various Northwest Coast traditions, the art

²⁰ Media Guide, 53.

of the Salish peoples continues to be distinctive and arrestingly beautiful.”²¹ Having briefly described “Hymn to the North,” I will turn now to an in-depth interpretation of each mode independently, before bringing them together for combined analyses and conclusions.

Textual Analysis

There are numerous important textual elements which provide interpretive data for this scene. In addition to the title of the scene, and the texts used as quotes within the ceremony, my textual analysis also draws on the description of the scene provided within the media guide. The public program does not give descriptive words about the scene, but it does include the quotations used, printed in both French and English, and then the credits for the scene. In this analysis, I focus on how these texts contribute to a settler colonial engagement with the land, and how they frame Canada’s history within the trajectory of the settler colonial goals. Building from the principles of settler colonialism which I outlined in the previous chapters, I observe themes of erasure and extraction as evidence of the colonial mindset, I also pay attention to how landscape-based tropes, and reference to multiculturalism and diversity contribute to branding a national identity which is structured around settler colonial narratives.

“Hymn to the North”

The title of this scene of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony is “Hymn to the North.” In addition to referring to the northern part of Canada, the term “North” also becomes synonymous with the nation as a whole, emphasizing a distinction from our southern neighbors, the USA. As mentioned in the first chapter, a key element of the settler colonial national identity

²¹ Official Program, 52. Although this quotation centers and honors the art and artists of the Salish people, it may still be a settler interpretation of that art, and its use in the ceremony here may be reflective of the settler appropriation of Indigenous art and culture for the Canadian national identity. It is beyond the scope of the current project to do so, but future projects could research these inclusions more thoroughly, and especially be in dialogue with Salish artists about their own interpretations of their artworks and the inclusions that are made in this scene and other scenes in the Opening Ceremony.

creation process involves identifying a distinct aspect of the landscape, laying claim to it, and “gatekeeping it.”²² Frequently the unique aspect of the landscape that is being guarded is simply its “vastness” — as later sections of this analysis will show. In centering Canada’s identity as North, the organizers here build on an exclusionary framework for defining the nation.

References to Canada as “North” originated within the Canada First Movement, which was a new nationalist movement that developed in Canada in the 1860s after Confederation.²³ The goals of the Canada First Movement sought to emphasize northernness through drawing on the British heritage, emphasizing Canada’s unique geography, and the presence of other “northern races.”²⁴ These characteristics were exclusionary in nature in that the harsh Canadian climate was viewed as being incompatible with “weaker southern races.”²⁵ Thus, although the new nation desperately needed citizens, it held a limited view as to who could be included as citizens.²⁶

Now that we have addressed the object of attention that the title of this scene, we pay attention to the implications of the word “Hymn.” The term “hymn” comes from the context of worship to God (or gods), its purpose is to honor, and thus sets up the context of the encounter as sacred. The word implies a distance from, distinction from, and a reverence for the object. It relates to the concept of awe, which is echoed in Garneau’s poem as well (to be discussed below). This theme of religious awe, placed on the landscape or aspects of nature and lacking a deity as the object, continues in the second scene which is entitled “Sacred Grove”, and will be

²² Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker, *Settler: Identity and Colonialism in 21st Century Canada* (Black Point, Nova Scotia; Fernwood Publishing, 2015), 28.

²³ Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 29-30.

²⁴ Robert G Haliburton’s 1869 speech “We are the Northmen of the New World,” cited in Mackey, *House of Difference*, 30.

²⁵ Mackey, *House of Difference*, 30.

²⁶ Mackey, *House of Difference*, 32.

analyzed in the next chapter. Hymns do not belong to one particular culture and can vary in style across time and place; what the use of the term does here is establish the purpose of the scene as being to honor, and later, the musical analysis will articulate what kind of hymn is being employed here and what the implications of that are for the meaning of the present scene. I argue that by framing this scene as a song of honor to a sacralized element of landscape, the organizers of the Opening Ceremony are embodying a settler colonial engagement with that land in order to appropriate it and use it in the definition of the settler nation (as the quote from Lowman and Barker suggested). Presently, I will discuss how the use of this term relates to the musical choices made in this scene, and will argue that the structure of a portion of the musical underscore reinforces the idea of this scene as being imbued with religious awe, although it is defined by a Eurocentric version of religious awe.

Garneau “Winter” Quotation – Emptiness/Erasure

The first quote interpolated into this scene is an excerpt from the poem entitled “L’Hiver” in the original French, or “Winter” as it is known in English, by François-Xavier Garneau. Garneau was a nineteenth-century French-Canadian writer and historian. When this excerpt of poetry is heard within the ceremony, it is the voice of Donald Sutherland quoting the first four lines of the seventh stanza of Garneau’s poem (1:31:20–1:31:42).²⁷ To understand the full meaning of the use of this text from Garneau’s poem, it is important to situate Garneau’s work in its broader context, both the time and culture in which he was writing, and the other parts of the poem that this segment is excerpted from. Garneau was writing at a time in Canadian history when the French were being overwhelmed by the English majority, and their presence and

²⁷ The whole poem is nine stanzas long, and the complete text (in the original French) can be read in the critical edition, Yolande Grisé and Paul Wyczynski, *Poésies: François-Xavier Garneau*, Éd. Critique, (Québec, QC: Presses de l’Université Laval, 2012), 201-203.

history was being denied.²⁸ In addition to being a prolific poet, Garneau's primary written contribution was his *Histoire du Canada*. Scholars attribute this work to being a significant contribution to French-Canadian cultural nationalism in that it inspired future generations of French Canadians to write their own poems, novels and histories which helped to furnish their unique identity as no longer French, and neither British nor American.²⁹ Garneau's *Histoire* was written in response to the Durham Report which had dismissed the French Canadians as being "without a history."³⁰ Thus, as Lisa Gasbarrone explains, "Garneau seeks to write Quebec into history, in explicit defiance of those on either side of the Atlantic who sought to write the Quebecois out."³¹ In doing so, however, Garneau further marginalized the First Nations, "whom he relegates to a place outside of history."³² Reflective of much literature at this time, Garneau's representation of Indigenous-settler relations relies on the stereotype of the "Noble Savage" and also situates First Nations not as part of the history, but as part of nature or "within the *geography*."³³ Although these comments do not refer to the excerpt used in the Opening Ceremony, they provide context for Garneau's work, and summarise his position as a settler, and the implications that had for his relationship with and representation of the First Nations within his work.

Within the ceremony itself, I argue that the inclusion of Garneau's poem articulates a settler colonial positionality in relationship to the landscape. When the excerpt is reviewed in the context of the remainder of Garneau's poem, this connection is made even more explicit.

²⁸ Lisa M. Gasbarrone, "Narrative, Memory, and Identity in François-Xavier Garneau's *Histoire Du Canada*," *Québec Studies* 34 (2002), 32-34.

²⁹ Andrea Cabajsky, "Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century French-Canadian Literature," in *The Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature*, Oxford Handbooks of Literature (Oxford University Press, 2016), 242-243.

³⁰ Durham Report, cited in Gasbarrone, "Narrative, Memory, and Identity," 32.

³¹ Gasbarrone, "Narrative," 33-34.

³² Gasbarrone, "Narrative," 44.

³³ Gasbarrone, "Narrative," 38.

Excerpted in the ceremony are lines 57–60 of the poem. In the excerpt quoted in the ceremony, the key words, “silence,” “splendor,” “vastness” and “shining with whiteness” bring to mind a unique part of Canada’s landscape (i.e. the North, as identified in the title of this scene, and also by its characteristics listed here) and effectively communicate the speaker’s awe of the environment, affirming again that this scene is serving as a “hymn.”³⁴ The words “silence” and “vastness” here align with the settler colonial view of the landscape as empty and open for settlement and extraction of resources. The other terms all reflect the concept of awe. When this quote is understood within the context of the rest of Garneau’s poem, it serves to re-center a settler colonial relationship to the land. This is made clear by the authors of the critical edition of Garneau’s poetry. In explaining how Garneau portrayed an individual’s relationship to the landscape in this, and another of his poems they state: “Untamed, Canadian landscape conceals death that startles the boatman in the fog [referring to another of Garneau’s poems: “Le Marin”] or the explorer lost in the cold of a winter night.”³⁵ What Grisé and Wyczynski’s explanation here highlights is that the excerpted portion of Garneau’s poem used in the Opening Ceremony does not relate to the reader is that in the next stanza of the poem, it is the harsh and deadly danger of the landscape that results in the “fatal sleep” of the lost traveler.³⁶ Despite the beauty of the landscape, the (presumably settler) explorer mentioned in Garneau’s poem succumbs to the dangers of the landscape with which they are unfamiliar, and which, although they respect, do so from distance rather than from intimate knowledge. Rather than making space in the ceremony and advocating for Indigenous presence on the land, in privileging Garneau’s settler relationship to the land, the organizers erase Indigenous agency and presence, inviting the

³⁴ François-Xavier Garneau, “Winter,” *Opening Ceremony of Vancouver 2010*.

³⁵ Grisé and Wyczynski, *Poésies*, 29. Translation assistance for this quote provided by my neighbour, Julia.

³⁶ Line 73 of the poem, Grisé and Wyczynski, *Poésies*, 203. Translation of relevant stanzas of the poem provided to me by Cassandra Chapman.

audience to occupy a settler positionality as embodied in this poem, which views the land as empty, and at times, dangerous.

Schlesinger “Refuge” Quotation

The second quotation used in “Hymn to the North” are the words of Joe Schlesinger, “I came to Canada as a refugee. Forty-five years later, for me, Canada is a refuge still.”³⁷ This quotation originates from a plaque at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Although now a museum, Pier 21, located at the Halifax Seaport was an important site for immigration to Canada, with close to one million immigrants landing there between 1928 and 1971.³⁸ The presence of this quotation, I argue, is critical to how we are to interpret this scene. Joe Schlesinger, a well-known Canadian journalist who passed away in 2019, was a refugee who first escaped from the former Czechoslovakia to Britain in 1939, and then from communist Prague (where he worked as a journalist) to Canada in 1950.

Since the 1940s, Canada has been known for welcoming refugees. The use of this quotation at the Olympics should be viewed in its historical context. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, in 2009, Canada resettled over 12,500 refugees. The Olympic event in question occurred before the Syrian Refugee crisis of 2011, and before Stephen Harper’s government began to implement healthcare cuts for refugees in 2012. None of the documents I was able to access from the organizing committee explain the reason for the inclusion of this quote, so we must simply interpret it as part of the process of rehearsing national identity that this ceremony embodied. To me, this quotation provides an explanation of the

³⁷ “Joe Schlesinger Memorial Award in Journalism,” *Toronto Metropolitan University*, School of Journalism, accessed August 6, 2024, <https://www.torontomu.ca/journalism/awards/joe-schlesinger-memorial-award-in-journalism/>.

³⁸ “About the Museum,” Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, accessed August 6, 2024, <https://pier21.ca/about/about-museum>.

primary identity of the characters present on stage. As the visual analysis discussed below reveals, there is some debate amongst scholars about the identity of the characters who are present on the stage during this scene. Some view the characters presented here as a mix of Indigenous peoples and settlers (Fresco), while others view them as only one or the other (Tovell: “Northern Aboriginals,” Ellis: “Pioneers”).³⁹ Despite these contradictory interpretations, I argue that the quotation included here is being used to emphasize a particular kind of identity which denies the damage of the settler invasion, and instead paints a more peaceful picture by highlighting the plight of those arriving in the country as “refugees.” This quotation is used here to communicate to the audience that the people on stage are not settlers, but immigrants or refugees. According to the Media Guide, “the performers represent the diversity of the people who have come to Canada seeking a home, a dream and a refuge.”⁴⁰ This language dangerously echoes the “we are all immigrants” rhetoric which has been critiqued in recent years as a means of distracting attention from the settler colonial invasion that was the foundation of settler presence. The language of “immigration” is one that is frequently invoked in settler colonial nations, especially by political leaders in the United States, notably by John F. Kennedy, and then by future US Presidents and presidential candidates, including Barack Obama and Hilary Clinton, each one emphasizing, “we are a nation of immigrants.”⁴¹ As Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz explains “the ideology behind the phrase also works to erase the scourge of settler colonialism and the lives of Indigenous peoples.”⁴² Referring to Barack Obama’s famous statement, Audra

³⁹ Fresco, “Impassioned Objects,” 198-199; Bethany-Marie Tovell, “Spectacle and Sport: Narrative Tenets and the Inclusion of Music in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies” (M.H.K., University of Windsor (Canada), 2013), 56; Cath Ellis, “The Possessive Logic of Settler-Invader Nations in Olympic Ceremonies,” *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 10, no. 2 (2012), 23.

⁴⁰ Media Guide, 49.

⁴¹ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Not “A Nation of Immigrants”:* *Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion* (Beacon Press, 2021), xiii.

⁴² Dunbar-Ortiz, *Not “A Nation of Immigrants,”* xii.

Simpson explains, “This is the presumption that the colonial project has been realized: land has been dispossessed; its owners have been eliminated or absorbed. This clean-slate settlement is now considered a ‘nation of immigrants’ (except the Indians). But this belief demonstrates a blindness to the structure of settler-colonial nation-statehood.”⁴³ Azeezah Kanji also agrees that this phrase, and the belief behind it are damaging and states “‘we are all immigrants’ hides the violence of settler colonialism by calling it immigration”⁴⁴ In using the Schlesinger quote, which emphasizes that people come to Canada seeking refuge, the narratives of invasion and settler colonialism are rewritten as peaceful, denying settler colonialism and emphasizing immigration over invasion. This trend is one that is common in performances of national identity at Olympic Games, particularly by settler-colonial states. Nathan Kalman-Lamb, drawing on analyses by Jackie Hogan, explains that both the Sydney 2000 Games, and the Salt Lake City Games of 2002 “incorporated pioneer narratives that rewrote the history of colonization as collaboration between Europeans and indigenous peoples.”⁴⁵ Kalman-Lamb goes on to say, “the inclusion of Indigenous presence becomes a means of sanitizing histories of violence in these articulations of official multiculturalism.”⁴⁶ These sanitized histories appearing in both Sydney and Salt Lake City opening ceremonies offered a “highly expurgated narrative of colonization,” Hogan says, although she explains that the possible reasoning for this is that “discourses of national identity are, after all, as much stories of what the nation *should be* as they are stories of what a nation was

⁴³ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Duke University Press: London, 2014), 11-12.

⁴⁴ Azeezah Kanji, “We are not all immigrants here: Kanji,” *The Toronto Star*, accessed June 4, 2023, https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/we-are-not-all-immigrants-here-kanji/article_01b889e7-b7bd-5103-8f12-219a445b4994.html

⁴⁵ Nathan Kalman-Lamb, “‘A Portrait of This Country’: Whiteness, Indigeneity, Multiculturalism and the Vancouver Opening Ceremonies,” *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 27 (2012) 16.

⁴⁶ Kalman-Lamb, “‘A Portrait of this Country,’” 16.

and is.”⁴⁷ Overall, the emphasis and inclusion of this quote distracts attention from the violent histories of colonialism and reinforces Canada’s peaceful kingdom identity through painting this place as somewhere that is a welcoming refuge.

Visual Analysis

Two significant visual elements are featured in this scene—the artistic elements incorporated in the staging, including what is referred to as the Spirit Bear, and the actors and their costumes. In interpreting these visual elements, I argue that overall whiteness of the scene as a whole and the costumes points to the erasure used by settler colonialism that operates in service of the logic of elimination. The presence of various symbols which are of significance to Indigenous cultures serves as an act of appropriation which centers the settler theft in pursuit of culture and identity. Further, I argue that the overall whiteness featured here accomplishes three things. Firstly, it positions the viewer in a particular place and season—Canada’s snowy winter (i.e. North, relevantly). Secondly, it mythologizes what is happening by spectralizing the content—that is, it sanitizes the interaction of first contact, as well as placing that interaction in mythic past. By placing the characters in white costumes, I argue that the designers are drawing on a heritage that ghosts or specters are usually presented in media in white costumes, thus spectralizing this event. Finally, I suggest that the white costumes are figurative of assimilating diversity into whiteness, it is a literal whitewashing of the cultures and diversity that are being represented. These two techniques—the appropriation of symbols from nature which are held in reverence by Indigenous people, and then the erasure/assimilation of cultural diversity into what is presented as the white norm are evidence of the logic of settler coloniality operating in the visual mode of this scene.

⁴⁷ Jackie Hogan, “Staging The Nation: Gendered and Ethnicized Discourses of National Identity in Olympic Opening Ceremonies,” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 27, no. 2 (2003): 116.

There are numerous visual elements which are incorporated into this scene which are significant to Indigenous cultures, but which are presented with little to no meaningful Indigenous context. That is, they have been extracted from their Indigenous contexts and are appropriated by the settler state. For example, at the climax of the scene, the circular banners descend from the ceiling of the stage and are animated by images of the Northern Lights. Shortly afterwards 4 animal constellations—a Buffalo, Eagle, Wolf/Coyote, and Bear, which are reference to the constellations of the Four Directions appear in the sky.⁴⁸ Finally, the large Spirit Bear puppet (standing approximately 20m tall) becomes the visual centre of the scene. The Spirit Bear puppet was designed by Michael Curry (an Oregon-based artist).⁴⁹ Each of these elements is appropriated into the ceremony in service of curating the Canadian national identity, drawing from a stolen Indigenous heritage, a technique which will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

As described above, at the beginning of the scene, a main character holding a staff walks out into the center of the stage. The stark white of their costume, combined with the ambiguity of its features (various feathers and shreds of fabric, as well as the hat they wear, and the staff they carry with a stone affixed to the top of it) do not provide concrete clues as to their identity. Their actions in the scene mainly involve walking around the stage, until they take a spot right in the center of the stage (1:34:19), raise their staff to the sky (at which point the stone lights up). They then strike the stage floor with the bottom of the staff in rhythmic pattern (1:34:42), sending shockwaves out across the surface of the “ice,” an action that triggers the descent of the circular banners from the ceiling on which are projected images of the Northern Lights. This character, presumably meant to be indicative of someone wielding magic powers, based on their role in this

⁴⁸ Media Guide, 50. The Coyote/wolf confusion here is directly from the media guide, where on this page they refer to it once as the coyote and once as a wolf.

⁴⁹ “About,” Michael Curry Design, Michael Curry, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.michaelcurrydesign.com/about>.

scene, but is only referred to by the media guide as the “lone figure.” My own inability to identify this character beyond these generic qualities is further evidence of the settler colonial tendencies that mark my own interpretive abilities—a bias or blindness that limits my ability to recognize elements of Indigenous presence and creativity. Baloy refers to this character as “shaman-like.”⁵⁰ Cherokee scholar and activist Adrienne Keene expresses concern at the stereotyped representation of what she reads as a “mystical Native guy tied to nature brings magic to the ‘normal’ community.”⁵¹ Ellis suggests that this part of the scene “encourages a reading whereby Indigenous people welcome settlers and offer them guidance and refuge.”⁵² She also notes this process of featuring an Indigenous guide as typical in settler Olympic ceremonies, noting similar scenes in the Sydney 2000 Games, and the Salt Lake City 2002 Games.⁵³

The lone figure is not alone on stage for long before being joined by a host of other characters in completely white costumes. As mentioned in Chapter One, and as will be discussed regarding other characters employed in the scenes discussed in later chapters, my primary interest in these characters is how they embody a particular relationship to the land, invite or disrupt the settler gaze, and what their presence articulates about the Canadian national identity being performed and rehearsed here.

The symbolic and metaphoric significance of whiteness in the context of national and racial identity is an enormous topic. Richard Dyer’s seminal text *White* looks more at the representation and construction of white bodies and faces in media. In this scene, it is not white bodies, per say, that are as informative as is the drastic whiteness of the scene as a whole, but

⁵⁰ Baloy, “Spectacle,” 144.

⁵¹ Adrienne Keene, “The Vancouver Opening Ceremonies: honouring Canadian First Nations?” Native Appropriations, accessed March 12, 2024. <https://nativeappropriations.com/2010/02/the-vancouver-opening-ceremonies-honoring-canadian-first-nations.html>.

⁵² Ellis, “Possessive Logic,” 28.

⁵³ Ellis, “Possessive Logic,” 22, 24.

most particularly noted in the costumes. Dyer explains “the term ‘white’ refers less to a colour than to a lack of colour,” and it has “come to represent what is ordinary, neutral, even universal.”⁵⁴ Katarina Mattsson extends Dyer’s work and writes “the use of the colour white itself has these normative functions, as it is often thought of as a non-colour and holds a set of values and symbolism that is regarded as positive: purity, trustworthy and so on.”⁵⁵ James Snead, writing on the use of color particularly in the cinematic context, explains, “color equally invokes...certain *metaphorical* chains (white/black, light/darkness, sun/soul, good/evil, purity/pollution, feeling/thought, and so on).”⁵⁶ It is from these perspectives on the significance of the color white that I present the analyses in these paragraphs.

Overall, what is most striking about this scene is the stark whiteness of the costumes. While the media guide claims that “each costume refers to the different peoples who have come to Canada over thousands and thousands of years,” the choice to blur distinctness by having each costume be entirely white lends credence to my interpretation of this scene as evidence of both assimilation and erasure, and of presenting a mythologized peaceful picture of encounter.⁵⁷ The designs depicted in the media guide appear to be much more distinctive than the actual costumes used in the ceremony (see, for example 1:33:15–1:33:27, contrasted with the designs from the Media Guide). The example picture provided in the media guide showed a variety of costumes with printed designs on them that appeared to be images of identifiable architectural and cultural icons from various parts of the world (for example, St Basil’s Cathedral from Russia, the Eiffel Tower, possibly an excerpt from a totem pole. The costume design must have evolved from the

⁵⁴ Richard Dyer, *White: Twentieth Anniversary Edition*, 2nd ed., (London: Routledge, 2017), xviii, xvi.

⁵⁵ Katarina Mattsson, “Not me, yet part of me: destabilizing the silence of visual whiteness,” in *Body Claims*, ed. Janne Bromseth, Lisa Folkmarson Kall, and Katarina Mattsson, (Uppsala: Uppsala universitet, Centrum för genusvetenskap, 2009), 141.

⁵⁶ James A. Snead, *White Screens, Black Images: Hollywood from the Dark Side* (London: Routledge, 2016), 123.

⁵⁷ Media Guide, 48.

time of their original envisioning to their use in the ceremony, because no such distinguishing features are incorporated in the costumes used in the ceremony itself. Instead, the designers used different shapes and styles of costumes. There is one that seems to make direct reference to First Nations—worn by the individual which the camera focusses on at 1:34:33. Wearing what appears to be a headpiece made out of paper and designed to look like a feathered headdress or war bonnet worn by chiefs of many Indigenous groups across Turtle Island, this costume depicts what is one of the most stereotypical images of Native Americans. By replicating distinct cultural garb, but limiting it to stereotypical representation and presenting it in monochromatic white (mentioned above by Dyer as not so much a color but the absence of color), the artistic choices here reflect the ways in which settler colonialism assimilates and erases cultural diversity and renders both Aboriginality and other minoritized peoples as “specters,” as Baloy, Cameron, and others assert. Despite the fact that the design of the costumes points to different cultural groups, I argue that the whiteness of these costumes reflects the process of assimilation that is required of the people who come to Canada. As scholar of settler colonialism Patrick Wolfe has stated, “assimilation is one of a range of strategies of elimination.”⁵⁸ In alignment with the tools of assimilation, the vibrancy of their diverse identities has been muted as a means of focusing the attention on the overarching culture being promoted here. Similarly, I argue that the overall whiteness of this scene serves to position this segment as a portrayal of a mythologized past, as the settler nationalist control over the nation’s myths serves their underlying goals. As Johnston and Lawson explain, “the settler seeks to establish a nation, and therefore needs to become native and to write the epic of the nation’s origin.”⁵⁹ Retelling the origin story of the nation in a way

⁵⁸ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 401.

⁵⁹ Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, (Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), 365.

that diminishes the conflict and contestation of the past (and the present) is a tool of settler colonialism. Lowman and Barker call this a “sanitized” version of the history and explain that it involves “emphasis on practices of benevolent or philanthropic colonialism involve peacemaking, treaties, and the giving of ‘gifts’” and that it is “used to overwrite the realities of how the new nation was formed through warfare, terrorism, subjugation, and theft.”⁶⁰ This figurative sanitizing of the nation’s history is portrayed here in the literal sanitizing (i.e. white-washing) of the costumes worn by the characters in the scene. Additionally, as Brownlie states, starting history at contact is a means of erasure.⁶¹

The whiteness of the costumes serves also to confuse the identity of the characters for the audience, as demonstrated in some of the scholarly responses to this scene. Contradicting what media guide describes this group of people as representative of “a rainbow of diversity,” their entirely white costumes, although each with unique characteristics, do not direct us to assume any particular cultural heritage.⁶² Bethany-Marie Tovell describes the entry of the actors at the beginning of the “Landscape of a Dream” portion and interprets them as “northern Aboriginals exploring the land.”⁶³ I disagree with Tovell’s interpretation. It is not as obvious as she assumes that these people are “northern Aboriginals.” From the appearance of the characters who are shown in close up, there are very few people of color included, and the majority of characters appear to be white. Marusya Bociurkiw calls these costumes “white pseudo-Arctic regalia.”⁶⁴ In

⁶⁰ Lowman and Barker, *Settler*, 26.

⁶¹ Robin Jarvis Brownlie, “First Nations Perspectives and Historical Thinking in Canada,” in *First Nations, First Thoughts* (University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 22.

⁶² Media Guide, 48.

⁶³ Bethany-Marie Tovell, “Spectacle and Sport: Narrative Tenets and the Inclusion of Music in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies” (M.H.K., University of Windsor (Canada), 2013), 56.

⁶⁴ Marusya Bociurkiw, *Feeling Canadian Television, Nationalism, and Affect*, Film and Media Studies (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2011), 152. There is one group of individuals among the actors on stage that does include a costume with a Native American headpiece, but they appear on screen for a very brief period of time. The camera rather focusses on a young white couple.

contrast, Estee Fresco interprets this scene as “dramatizing the first meeting of Indigenous peoples and European Settlers.”⁶⁵ The actors do greet each other with handshakes and waves.

Cath Ellis’ interpretation is that “this sequence...is clearly meant to represent those who had come to Canada to look for a home and a refuge. Pioneers enter the arena in groups.”⁶⁶

Regardless of who is actually being portrayed here, I suggest that the whiteness of the costumes renders these characters as ghostly specters. Although the intent of the scene was to portray diversity (based on the media guide comment referred to earlier), this scene instead renders Indigenous people and people of color as specters, assimilated into the past. The ‘real’ people, who we presume are representative of the white settler majority, enter the scene at the beginning of the next scene. This part of the scene also provides a jarring contrast to the previous part of the Opening Ceremony—the Four Host First Nations welcome, where the different Indigenous groups who partnered with VANOC were featured in the vibrant costumes representing their cultures.

In conclusion, the costumes in “Hymn to the North” contribute to communicating a confusing, condensed, sanitized vision of the history that is being portrayed. If this scene is portraying the first contact between settlers and First Nations, or indeed if it is presenting the arrival of refugees on the land, what is presented here is a myth. By using the Schlesinger quote, the organizers belie the violence of first contact and attempt to neutralize the violence of settler colonialism by painting the picture that those who settled and continue to settle Canada, are all refugees. This is damaging both to the Indigenous people and the abuses they experienced at the hands of settlers and, to the refugees who come to Canada escaping the threat of death, war, illness, and other precarity. Based on the visual elements of this scene, these “refugees” appear to

⁶⁵ Fresco, “Impassioned Objects,” 198–99.

⁶⁶ Ellis, “Possessive Logic,” 25-26.

be immigrants entering a barren white landscape, with only the remnants of the previous culture left for them to observe. This technique of emptiness is also used during the Opening Ceremony of Sydney 2000. When the pioneer characters (riding horses) entered the stage, Cath Ellis explains that they did so “riding over an enormous, painted, canvas groundsheet that represented a huge empty, featureless expanse: arguably the largest representation of *terra nullius* ever produced.”⁶⁷ Ellis’ description here sounds strikingly similar to the visual expression of the “refugees” or “immigrants” entering the stage that is seen in this scene. Rather than a sheet being used however, the stage floor itself is lit up like a screen, with no features, except for a vast sheet of snow or ice. As mentioned in the Introductory Chapter, Vancouver 2010 and Sydney 2000 shared several lead organizers in common, including artistic directors David Atkins and Ignatius Jones, and their associate artistic director, Drew Anthony. Thus, it is no surprise that there are artistic similarities in the way the ceremony unfolds the story of settlement, however, as my argument in this dissertation asserts, it is not merely a matter of personnel, but a matter of the underlying logic of settler colonialism—a logic that is grounded in possession, erasure, and extraction.

Musical Analysis

In this section, I summarise the main sounds and musical elements that are incorporated into this scene, paying close attention to how diverse instrumentation and musics are handled, as well as how Eurocentric ideals are performed in the musical choices. I interpret how these choices contribute to reinforcing settler colonial goals, in spite of the appearance of recognition. As Coulthard and Robinson’s work suggests, and as I discussed in Chapter Two, mere recognition (or, in the context of the Olympic event, musical inclusion) is not indicative of

⁶⁷ Ellis, “The Possessive Logic,” 18-19.

structural changes being made, and can in fact, stand in the way of Indigenous sovereignty being articulated through resurgence. In analysing the musical choices made here, I observe that sounds and musical techniques contributing to emptiness and erasure are employed, European musical identity is centered, and finally, that inclusion is used but presented in a way that “spectralizes.”

The predominant sound at the beginning of this scene is actually one of absence. There is very little music for the first portion of the scene, and instead, the auditory space is filled with sound effects. The main sound effects that are used are of a harsh wind (1:31:15–20, for example), as if the landscape that the characters are entering is a vast, empty one. There are sparse synthesized chords, and occasional echoes of other sounds. This stark aural space, I suggest, further emphasizes what is also a very visually stark space. The wind sounds presented here are not of a gentle breeze rustling through the leaves, or the gusts of wind accompanied by the noise of human occupancy—chatter between people, or the bustling about sounds of day-to-day activity. The wind sounds presented here are harsh, rushing wind, as if across a barren landscape like a desert. Curating the space as initially empty is a stereotypical device of settler colonialism—as Johnston and Lawson assert, and as was mentioned in Chapter One. Portraying the land as empty before settlers arrived furthers the goals of settler colonialism because “empty land can be settled.”⁶⁸ The music, or lack thereof, in this instance, is thus directly contributing to the ideals and ideologies of establishing the settler colonial nation—the erasure of Indigenous presence for the purpose of legitimating the settler on the land.

Sparseness of sound is a noted quality in Canadian music. For instance, Elaine Keillor describes Harry Somers’s work *North Country* as having “sparse texture and long soaring lines”

⁶⁸ Johnston and Lawson, “Settler Colonies,” 364.

which are “considered one of the hallmarks of a distinctively Canadian idiom.”⁶⁹ Canadian composer Harry Freedman explains, “I find ‘gaunt’ and ‘lonely’ two very fitting adjectives to describe the particular beauty of a great deal of Canada’s varied landscape.”⁷⁰ In a summary study of orchestral music composed for the Canadian centennial, Isaac Page notes that “long high (string) lines, wide register spacing, delicate orchestration, thin textures, harmonic stasis” are characteristic of music meant to indicate the “North.”⁷¹ Within this portion of the Opening Ceremony, techniques such as these can be heard during 1:32:57–1:33:29 as the underscore during the Schlesinger quote. The music almost feels static, but there is a faint string melody that ascends up a major mode scale and pauses before resolving to the more fully orchestrated hymn melody that begins at 1:33:30.

Following this overarching silence, the predominant musical feature of this scene is a “hymn-like” melody, if we restrict ourselves to the definition of a hymn from a particular culture and period of time (i.e. bearing characteristics of western, particularly Christian sacred music, used in the context of a communal worship service). The hymn-like melody used here is repeated fully twice, but various echoes of it are fragmented throughout the scene. As the actors come into view, the orchestral background music gets louder, and the “hymn” melody is heard in its entirety for the first time (1:33:30). Like many hymns, this music features a diatonic, mostly stepwise melody, which starts and ends on the tonic. It has a simple rhythm, with no syncopations. The melody itself is a balanced 8 measure phrase. The melody is played first in F major (begins 1:33:30), and then abruptly changes to G major (1:33:52). Fragments of this

⁶⁹ Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2006), 220.

⁷⁰ Harry Freedman, cited in Keillor, *Music in Canada*, 304.

⁷¹ Isaac Page, “Orchestral Music of the Canadian Centennial” (MMus, Ohio, Bowling Green State University, 2020), 35.

melody are also heard in the background in several parts of the scene. At the climax of the scene (where the banners descend from the ceiling and the Northern Lights appear projected on them), a trumpet fanfare adaptation of two and a half measures of this melody is used (1:35:09).

Overall, the way this melody is orchestrated and incorporated into the scene lends a sense of grandeur to the scene, appropriate to the goals of honoring the North. It is this melody that can be most closely related to the title of the scene, “Hymn to the North.” The musical style as indicated here, and thus, what is used to frame this scene, is essentially, a Christian hymn, with roots in the Protestant reformation from Europe in the late 1500s. Centering an essentially European, Christian version of hymnody here rehearses settler colonialism by enforcing a Eurocentric frame of reference for musical characteristics. Kofi Agawu has suggested that “tonal harmony [operates] as a colonizing force.”⁷² Additionally, Grant Olwage describes homogeneous rhythm in hymns as contributing to aesthetic colonialism: “the rhythm and meter of Victorian hymnody,” he writes, is the “straitjacket” which stifled the “black choral composer’s musical imagination.”⁷³ Although both of these sources refer to the colonial impact of music on the African continent, their interpretations are relevant to the present analysis as well. Speaking specifically to the Anglo-Canadian context, Becca Whitla writes, “hymnody from the Victorian era came to embody colonialism.”⁷⁴

The use of a western, Christian style hymn in this segment to honor the north reinforces a settler colonial and white supremacist view of music—imposing particular rhythm and harmony as the most valid means of expression. In the same way that forcing Indigenous musics to fit the

⁷² V. Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*, (New York: Routledge, 2003), 8, 13.

⁷³ Grant Olwage, “Discipline and Choralism: The Birth of Musical Colonialism,” in *Music, Power, and Politics*, edited by Annie J. Randall, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 37-38.

⁷⁴ Becca Whitla, *Liberation, (De)Coloniality, and Liturgical Practices: Flipping the Song Bird*, *New Approaches to Religion and Power* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 79.

western tonal system results in a loss of nuance of those Indigenous musics, so too does forcing people to express themselves in a means of musical expression that is unfamiliar and dissonant to their own cultural ways of expression serve as an act of assimilation and erasure.⁷⁵ Becca Whitla and others write about how this was a tool of assimilation used in residential schools.⁷⁶

There are a few other excerpts of music used in “Hymn to the North” which contribute to the present interpretation. There is one small moment of faint chanting and drumbeats in the background that could be interpreted as evoking Indigenous musics, but apart from this moment, the music seems to draw solely on Western orchestral styles. This contradicts the intent and description of the scene provided by the Media Guide. The explanation for the music of this scene provided by the Media Guide states: “musical soundscapes include: Canadian Inuit throat singing, Aboriginal drums and voices, Persian santurs, Scottish bagpipes and Asian gamelan, among many sonically diverse instruments.”⁷⁷ I address this here rather than in the section on text because this is describing the musical content. Personally, I never hear any bagpipes in this scene, nor any “Canadian Inuit” throat singing. Like the costume revisions, perhaps changes were made to the design of the ceremony after the media guide was released. Regardless, what takes aural precedence is the hymn-like melody, and the traditional orchestral instruments, particularly trumpets, brass, and strings. What is occurring here, I argue, is that although an attempt is made to “be diverse” that diversity is overshadowed by the European heritage (read, white supremacy). Just like my analysis of a similar pattern in the fourth scene (to be analyzed in

⁷⁵ For more on this “loss of musical nuance” see Tara Browner, “Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890-1990” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1995), 9: “Written composition required some type of transcription, and the adaptation of Indian melodies inevitable entailed a loss of musical nuance or textual meaning, greater or lesser depending on the transcriber and the changes deemed necessary to fit within the European harmonic system.”

⁷⁶ Whitla, *Liberation*, 118. Whitla also points to Sarah Kathleen Johnson, “On Our Knees: Christian Ritual in Residential Schools and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada,” in *Studies in Religion* 47, no. 1 (2018), 3–24.

⁷⁷ Media Guide, 49.

Chapter Five of this dissertation), diversity is incorporated, but eventually forced to the background as what is truly “Canadian” is left occupying the central and supreme spot. I argue that the other sounds are “spectralized” (to use Baloy’s term) in that they are relegated to a distant past by how they are fragmented and situated in the background of the soundscape. For example, consider the sound excerpt which is what I presume the media guide refers to as the “Aboriginal drums and voices.” It is mostly the sound of chanting, or Indigenous vocable in the distance, repeated three times in this scene (1:32:01–1:32:06, 1:32:52, 1:35:52). Each time it is played, this sound is shorter and more faint than the previous time. The third time it is heard, at 1:35:52, it is so faint as to be almost inaudible. Rather than being a present sound, this is the sound of absence. I suggest that the technique of placing this sound in the background, almost as though it is an echo, is evidence of the spectralizing process that is characteristic of the settler colonial mindset. As one of the very few representations of Indigenous singers in the entire cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, and indeed, in the ceremony as a whole, in presenting the music in this way, the organizers have reduced Indigenous musics to one soundbite of settler stereotyped content.

The arrangement of the music in this scene is deeply reflective of a settler listening positionality, and of settler superiority. Firstly, the addition of the qualifier “Canadian” to the “Inuit throat singing” (mentioned above), demonstrates a colonial possessive view of Indigenous peoples, and manipulates their identity in service of the identity of the state. Secondly, that all the diversity of First Nations music in Canada is reduced to “Aboriginal drums and voices” reflects the practices of erasure through homogenization. It is interesting to note here which sounds and instruments are listed as “exotic” or “other” and which musical styles remain unnamed (i.e. Western Classical), and thus dominant by the presumption of their universal

recognition. According to Dylan Robinson, listening to Indigenous musics in ways that aim to satisfy a settler hunger, which is characterized by greed and by lack of critical attention is constitutive of the settler listening positionality.

As I have discussed, the musical choices as in this section reinforce settler colonial and Eurocentric ideas through their erasure of Indigenous presence, through the enforcing of a particular kind of hymnody, and through mining aspects of diversity but spectralizing it and forcing it to occupy a peripheral auditory space. In stark contrast to this, there is featured in the official program the story that is told by Sandy Scofield about how the music for the Indigenous Welcome was put together—she is credited with Bob Buckley for the piece “Four Host First Nations Welcome,” and is quoted in the official program. Sandy Scofield, a Métis composer and musician explained, “Much prayer and personal ceremony preceded the creation of this song, in which guidance was sought from the ancestors and the Creator to make a song of good medicine—one which would showcase our First Peoples in the most respectful and honourable light, as we welcome you to what has been our home from time immemorial.”⁷⁸ This description, as well as Scofield and her collaborator’s efforts are acts of refusal and resurgence. They demonstrate a complete departure from the western epistemology of music, and a return to an Indigenous ontology. Although in the context of the Opening Ceremony it could be viewed as a content change and not necessarily a structural change, Scofield’s explanation roots and centers the creativity of her community’s songwriting not in a Western or Eurocentric epistemology of music, but in an Indigenous one.

⁷⁸ Sandy Scofield, “Welcome from the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada,” *Official Program of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics*, 23. Opening Ceremony Program: Box: 822-G-01 fld 02 Reference Code: AM1550-S03, Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) fonds, City of Vancouver Archive.

Multimodal Analysis Result and Discussion

Following this analysis of the individual modes, and the narratives that they communicate, I now bring them together to discuss their combined narrative and the multimodal result of the interaction of these different semiotic resources. In this discussion, I am interested in which narratives are being amplified and thus centered. I am also interested in what the possible disjunctures reveal about the contradictions in constructions of Canadian national identity. Building from the analytic framework that I developed in the previous chapter, I argue that disjuncture between the narratives in the different semiotic modes can illuminate how the settler colonial ideology is operating in this spectacle, in that the content (i.e. representations) are changing, but the terms (i.e. underlying ideologies) are remaining un-changed.

The first major disjuncture that I observe in this scene is between the text which speaks of the refugee identity and the whiteness of the costumes. I argue that this is a disjuncture because these two messages are in conflict with one another. To speak of Canada as a refuge for people who are endangered because of the various circumstances of the places from which they come, while also presenting them as being either eliminated through ghosting or assimilation are concepts that are at odds. The artistic choices of emphasizing Canada as a refuge, while portraying those who settle here as having lost their distinctive identities through the stark white costumes is a disjuncture, which I argue, reveals the settler colonial tactic of assimilation. It also echoes Robinson's identification of inclusionary music and Coulthard's politics of recognition, demonstrating changes in content while terms remain intact (see line 3, and column 5 of the chart discussed in the previous chapter). That is, diversity is being acknowledged (content), but for the purpose of re-defining and justifying settler colonial nationhood (terms).

A similar disjuncture occurs between the text of finding refuge in Canada which is spoken of in Schlesinger's quote, and the identity of Canada being a vast empty plain (and by extended implication, dangerous), as the initial background music emphasized and as Garneau's poem is later used to affirm. These contradictory ideas—that Canada is a safe refuge but has a harsh and dangerous climate—have been used in the past to limit immigration and create policies which do so based on the supposed “climactic suitability” of those seeking to live in Canada. As discussed in the introductory chapter and earlier in this chapter, Canada's identity as “North” originated in racist immigration policies which excluded particular groups of people.

Overall, the message that is amplified here is one that centers the settler relationship with the land, or a settler positionality. This was achieved through the music, which was used to portray the land as empty, the whiteness of the costumes, and the text of Garneau's poem. Each of these semiotic resources (music, visuals, and text) amplified one another, and thus amplified a settler relationship to the land, and the settler colonial goals of erasure and appropriation.

Returning to the concept of the analytic framework from Chapter Two, the scene witnessed here contains examples of multiple interpretive results. There is immediate evidence of coloniality (row 1) in the visuals, the music, and the text. In each of these modes, as discussed above, coloniality is evident in how Indigenous peoples are absented, or how their presence and creativity is erased.

Secondly, the physical presence of the “refugees” is an example of inclusionary performance and the politics of recognition in action (row 2). In this row, the extractive logic of settler colonialism is evident. The settler colonial mindset of extraction appeals to diversity as a resource while centering whiteness (this will be more thoroughly discussed in Chapter Five). In the same way that settler colonialism thrives off the theft of Indigenous land, resources, and

culture, the theft of settler colonialism continues when Canada treats diverse cultures as resources to be mined. Building up a national identity by means of appropriating the identities of others, or appropriating their cultures, is also evident in that the value of these minoritized others is only appreciated for how their presence contributes to buttressing the peaceable kingdom myth.

What I observe here aligns well with the assertions of Robinson, Coulthard, Mignolo, and many others. Mere nods towards diversity or inclusion alone tend to operate at a surface level of engagement and are not effective means of decolonization. In this scene, that is evident in how in the single modes, there are attempts at inclusion, but these inclusions are either erased, or then contradicted by information from the other modes. In the combined narrative of the modes, it is the settler colonial position which is overwhelmingly amplified, demonstrating that the terms of engagement (foundationally settler-colonial) have been left undisturbed.

Conclusions of Chapter Three

Like the whiteness of the costumes which serve to create a ghostly appearance for the characters, the sounds of diversity in “Hymn to the North” are heard only as echoes, not as present. Settler colonialism has a tendency to isolate Indigeneity to the past (where it serves usefulness by reinforcing the myth of peaceful interaction), and treating the cultural products of Indigenous peoples as resources which can be mined for the purpose of defining a national identity for the settler community which lacks one (in a word, appropriation). Although textually, visually, and musically the intent in this scene and in the ceremony as a whole was to express diversity, in both the way the content of those semiotic channels is presented independently and in the resulting combination of those media, diversity is relegated to a mythologized past, while the Anglo-Canadian identity takes the foregrounded present. Settler colonialism thus effectively

erases, and forces to a space of haunting, the Indigenous peoples it had mere moments in the ceremony before, sought to center. As both Fresco's and Baloy's analyses of the context and commercial products surrounding the Vancouver games highlighted, Indigenous presence is often forced to occupy a "spectralized" position. As Cameron concludes about these spectralizing practices more generally, "confining the Indigenous to the ghostly also has the potential to re-inscribe the interests of the powerful upon the meanings and memories of place."⁷⁹

Just as scholar Rebecca Ann Edwards notes about the images used to promote the Vancouver 2010 Olympic games, "they are not ideal images to showcase any Aboriginal partnership as the people themselves are not present," I too affirm that in this scene, there is a lack of Indigenous presence, and that settler colonial practices of erasure are overwhelmingly evident.⁸⁰ This trend is not just present in this portion of the ceremony either, like Edwards, Kalman-Lamb also notices that the representation of Indigenous peoples almost entirely disappears by the end of the Opening Ceremony. He asserts, "the cultural sections of the ceremony are essentially dramatizations of white cultures in Canada."⁸¹ My analyses here affirm that observation.

In order to contradict the narratives of erasure and emptiness that are characteristic of settler nationalism, Eva Mackey states, "Aboriginal people lived and worked in that so-called emptiness."⁸² Applying her words to the present analysis, and focusing on Indigenous presence, this must actually be stated as "Indigenous people live and work in that so-called emptiness."

⁷⁹ Cameron, "Indigenous Spectrality," 390.

⁸⁰ Rebecca Ann Edwards, "Investigating the Narration of Nations: Promoting Canadian Passion for Winter Sports and Their Aboriginal Heritage in VANOC's 2010 Olympic Brand Identity and Marketing Campaign," (MPhil Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2014), 117.

⁸¹ Kalman-Lamb, "'A Portrait of This Country,'" 12.

⁸² Mackey, *House of Difference*, 45.

Additionally, contrary to what this scene portrays, the people who have come to Turtle Island seeking refuge are not merely apparitions of the past, nor are they ghostly assimilated apparitions of their past selves, forced to fit a Eurocentric frame of whiteness as this scene might lead audiences to believe.

Chapter Four – Landscapes of Settler Flourishing

Introduction

The second scene of the cultural portion transports audiences to the majestic forests of the West Coast of the northern part of Turtle Island, focusing on the lands surrounding what is now called Vancouver, and which are home to the Four Host First Nations. In this chapter, I delve into this second scene of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony and continue to examine the ways in which this spectacle of Canadian nationalism rehearses both the overt qualities and the underlying logics of settler colonialism. In particular, in this scene I argue that the narrative that is produced is one that follows the settler colonial tendencies of extraction and erasure, centering the perspectives and pleasure of the settler, and relying on settler colonial (i.e. Eurocentric/white supremacist) conceptions of relationship to land, nature, and music. In addition, I argue that the settler nation seeks validation through expressing expertise in what are essentially imperial art forms—painting, ballet, literature (poetry), and classical music. Drawing from the work of Pual Litt and others who describe the condition of settler nationalism as experiencing a “displaced culture dilemma,” I read the inclusion of ballet, classical music, painting, and poetry as an effort to establish an identity that performs success in these typically imperial forms of expression. Neither are these techniques particular to the Canadian context, but as Jackie Hogan has observed of the Sydney 2000 Olympics, “opening ceremony representations reflect long-standing perceptions of Europe as the pinnacle of culture and learning as well as Australian self-designation as essentially a European (specifically, British), society.”¹ Her analysis refers to the costumes of the performers (depicting musical instruments and jesters) and the ballet dancers as evidence of a European heritage which remains an important (although

¹ Jackie Hogan, “Staging The Nation: Gendered and Ethnicized Discourses of National Identity in Olympic Opening Ceremonies,” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 27, no. 2 (2003), 113.

contested) aspect of Australian identity. Hogan continues, “Europe was metonymically linked with the ‘high’ culture of classical music and ballet.”² These practices—of emphasizing the settler ties to Europe, are I argue, demonstrated throughout this scene and evidence of what settler colonial theorists have termed the “displaced culture dilemma.”

The overarching premise which guides my interpretation of the scene that I discuss in this chapter is what Paul Litt has referred to as the “displaced culture dilemma,” and which he identifies as a “central tenet” of settler colonial theory.³ Both aspects of Litt’s explanation of settler colonial theory are useful for the present chapter. He writes:

Settler colonial theory...diagnoses them [settlers] as suffering from a displaced culture dilemma, the product of being situated between two worlds and belonging wholly to neither. Their relationship with the imperium is fraught because they physically leave it behind but carry with them its culture, which is, unsurprisingly, ill-fitted to their new habitat. Their relationship with the indigenium is equally conflicted. Settlers eliminate Indigenes from the land while envying and emulating their organic relationship to with it.⁴

I see this displaced culture dilemma as being evident in the artistic choices that are made in this scene, more so than the other two case studies in this dissertation. Understanding that the settler national identity is plagued by the challenge of situating itself between the original imperial context, and appropriating the Indigenous identity of the colonial context powerfully illuminates how settler colonialism is at work in the choices in this scene. Litt continues, “The displaced culture dilemma arises because two fundamental objectives of settler nationalism, distinctiveness and external status, are at odds. The former demands indigenous uniqueness and the latter proficiency in metropolitan aesthetics, divergent goals that are devilishly difficult to reconcile.”⁵ As I argue in the analyses that follow, the Canadian national identity that is being constructed in

² Hogan, “Staging the Nation,” 113.

³ Paul Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory and Canadian Cultural Nationalism,” *Settler Colonial Studies*, May 30, 2023, 1.

⁴ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 2.

⁵ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 8.

“Sacred Grove” appeals to the imperial origins through presenting expertise in traditionally European art forms (classical music, ballet— perhaps what Litt means when he refers to “metropolitan aesthetics”) while Indigenous identity is appropriated through visual art, spoken word, and taking ownership of the landscape. It is in the conflict between these two different types of identity formation and the management of their displaced culture that the settler colonial activity is revealed.

As in the preceding chapter, I will give an overview description of the scene before studying the modes independently for analysis. In addition to analysing and critiquing the settler colonial logics of the national identity rehearsal taking place in this scene, in this and each analytic chapter I aim to center and make note of Indigenous creativity and acts of resurgence. Thus, at times I re-direct the conversation or point to other elements of Indigenous creativity in an effort to “presence” Indigenous peoples and their sovereignty. For instance, later in this chapter I discuss the settler appropriation of some of Chief Dan George’s writing. Rather than only mentioning this misuse, I invite the reader to consider some of Chief George’s other work in which he himself calls out the damages that settler colonialism and settler nationalism have contributed to Indigenous life on Turtle Island. In centering George’s work in this way, I follow the idea that critique in and of itself is insufficient, and also seek to make space within my dissertation for Indigenous presence.⁶ Following the analyses of the individual modes, I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the implications of their combined narratives, highlighting how the combined modes tend to amplify a settler colonial position, and where disjunctures reveal conflict between Indigenous and settler ways and echo the conflict of the displaced culture dilemma.

⁶ Daniel K.L. Chua, “Critique,” *IMS Musicological Brainfood* 5, no 1, (2021), 6.

In the first portion of this chapter, I provide a general overview of the scene to summarise its main content and give the reader a description of the flow of the scene and its various parts. Next, I analyze each semiotic mode independently, questioning the type of narrative of national identity that is being rehearsed. Occasionally, as the analysis develops, I refer back to previous elements to enrich the discussion and draw parallels or contrasts between what the modes are communicating. Thus, my interpretation of the scene as a whole will develop organically from the analysis of the individual modes. Finally, I conclude the chapter with an interpretation of the scene as a whole, noting the ways in which the semiotic modes interact with one another to amplify, illustrate or create disjunctures. These multimodal interactions further guide the overall interpretation of the scene, as I discuss the ways in which settler colonial nationalism is being rehearsed through the gatekeeping of Canada's landscape, and the appropriation and erasure of Indigenous identity and creativity, just as I declared as the opening premise of this dissertation.⁷ Echoing the analytic framework that I developed in Chapter Two, throughout this chapter I note the presence of coloniality at various levels of representation and the implications of that content for moving towards a decolonized future.

Overview

The scene which forms the analytic case study for this chapter is entitled "Sacred Grove" and lasts for about 8 minutes (1:40:23–1:48:36). Compared to the previous scene where the snowy expanse of the north was the backdrop, in this scene, the producers and artists take the audience to the forests of the West Coast of what some now call Canada. Additional large banners are introduced which ascend from the center of the stadium floor to the ceiling and are then used as screens for artistic projections that change several times throughout the scene. The

⁷ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 12.

scene also features the dancers of the Alberta Ballet, choreographed by Jean Grand-Maître, as well as a musical performance by Sarah McLachlan, and the Opening Ceremony Orchestra, featuring both newly composed music by Dave Pierce and the *Adagio for Strings*, by Samuel Barber.

To aid in my analysis, I divide this scene into three distinct tableaux, identifiable by the different projections that are used on the vertical banners in the center of the stage, (in brief, these are totems, trees, flames/ashes). These banners, which help to distinguish the different tableaux, also help to frame a narrative for this scene, and provide visual interest beyond just the choreography and costuming. As my summary and the following analysis will show, the narrative is not necessarily a happy one, and is undergirded by settler colonial assumptions throughout. In each mode there is evidence of erasure, and appropriation or extraction, both of which center the settler identity. While there are moments which acknowledge Indigenous culture, in this scene that acknowledgement is eventually overtaken by nature itself or by settlers who are presented as seeking transcendence through nature. As in the previous chapter, in this analysis I also identify a major disjuncture between the modes, which serves to disrupt the idea that the spectacle represented here offers a cohesive and stable presentation of national identity. I continue to argue that these disjunctures feel like cracks in the perception of peaceful national status quo that reveal underlying settler-colonial/Indigenous conflict. I further propose that these disjunctures provide a means of entry into a discussion of how decolonization must address content and terms, building from my discussion and analytic framework that was developed in Chapter Two.

Tableau: Mode:	Totems (1:40:23–1:41:13)	Trees (1:41:13–1:46:08)	Flames/Ashes (1:46:08–1:48:36)
Visual 1 (Banners)	Totems	Trees	Flames/Ashes
Visuals 2 (Choreography)	Alberta Ballet – mostly walking and pointing.	Alberta Ballet – exuberant choreography covering most of the stage	Alberta Ballet – limited choreography, closer to center stage, physical ascension at climax.
Texts	No text	Chief Dan George quotation; McLachlan “Ordinary Miracle” lyrics	‘transform’ ‘transcend’ (from Media Guide)
Music	Orchestral Underscore	McLachlan “Ordinary Miracle” and Pierce, “Fantasy Ballet”	Barber, <i>Adagio for Strings</i>

Table 4.1 Division of “Sacred Grove” into Tableaus; based on Analytic Framework (Chapter Two)

Scene Description

Before moving on to a detailed analysis of each semiotic mode, I will first provide an overview of the scene that situates each element within the proper context of the scene as a whole, and in relationship to the other artistic elements being used in the scene. The scope of my analysis in this chapter covers elements of the visuals, musics and texts. Within the visual mode, I refer to both the projected material on the banners and the choreography of the dancers. The

texts that I include for analysis are a poem narrated within the ceremony, the lyrics of the pop song that is used in the scene and the description of the scene from the media guide. Finally, I note three musical elements including orchestral underscore, and pre-existing music including a pop song and work of classical music. The table above (see Table 4.1) provides a summary of these elements in the order that they appear within the ceremony. For ease of discussion, I have subdivided this scene into three tableaux, referred to by the visual projections that are used on the banners. Although these tableaux are named after the visual cues, it is the musical cues which provide the division of the scene.

At the beginning of the scene, large banners, which ascend from the floor to the ceiling arranged in a large circle, feature projections of totem poles. According to the media guide, these images were inspired by Emily Carr's art, especially her famous painting, "Crying Totem Poles."⁸ A mournful string melody is heard, with one short wood flute phrase as animations show large water droplets appearing to descend the totem poles (1:40:23–1:40:45, wood flute at 1:40:47). A numerous company of dancers from the Alberta Ballet, dressed in what could be described as pared-back business attire (shirts, vests, dress pants) enter the stage, and wander around casually, marveling at the totem poles and pointing them out to each other (e.g. 1:41:04–1:41:13). Gradually the projections on the vertical banners dissolve into trees (1:41:13–1:41:27, signaling the second tableau). The music ceases and a voice-over is heard: Donald Sutherland narrates a quote from Chief Dan George "The softness of the air... speaks to me, and my heart soars." After the quote, new music is introduced featuring Sarah McLachlan on the main elevated stage playing her song "Ordinary Miracle." The dancers perform contemporary ballet with joyful and enthusiastic movements during the song, and throughout an extended orchestral

⁸ Media Guide, 54.

arrangement entitled “Fantasy Ballet,” which builds on the motifs of McLachlan’s song. Towards the end of the piece there is an abrupt chord, at which the dancers freeze their movements (1:45:25). As McLachlan sings a closing unaccompanied tag of a line from her song, the projections of the trees on the vertical banners appear to burst into flames that descend from the ceiling canopy down toward the ground (tableau 3). A short instrumental transition introduces the piece “Adagio for Strings” by Samuel Barber. In time with the very slow harmonic rhythm of Barber’s piece, the dancers move more slowly and in motions which gradually emphasize that they are reaching towards the sky, although at times their actions are intertwined with each other—heads pressed together in pairs, they heave up and down as though weeping (1:47:37–1:47:46). The banners that were once totems, then trees, then engulfed in flames, are now only ashes and embers. At the climax of the Barber piece, the vertical banners turn white and drop dramatically from the sky (1:48:03). Some of the dancers ascend skyward via wire, while the others all reach longingly toward the sky with one hand raised. The arena darkens and the scene comes to an end. The combination of seemingly disparate elements as well as the way in which they are woven together here results in some complex analytic material. Before bringing them together in the final assessment, I’ll share my analysis of the visual, textual, and musical modes independently.

Visuals

In this chapter, I have chosen to address the visual elements first—since they are what guides the overall narrative drama of the scene. There are two fundamental visual elements used in “Sacred Grove:” the projections on the banners and the dancer’s movements. These projections serve to give context to the drama which unfolds on the stage below, and also offer important interpretive insights because of the way that the transitions between distinct visual

elements are handled. For instance—the subtle transition in the animation from totems to trees that is used here can only be described as a dissolution (which I will discuss in more detail shortly). Throughout this chapter I refer to the projections (and thus the tableaux in which they appear) by the summary names I have given them: totems, trees, and flames/ashes. In the analysis of the text and final combined analysis, insights gleaned from the media guide might offer alternative descriptions. In this section, I address the projections first, noting their content, the origin of that content, and how its presence or organization within the scene may reinforce settler colonial ideologies. Next, I discuss the choreography of the Alberta Ballet in relationship to the projections on the banners, and how their presence here facilitates or enforces a settler gaze.

Projections – Tableaus 1–3

The first visual element which appears in this scene are the large banners that have ascended from the center of the stage to the ceiling of the stadium. In the first portion of the scene (1:40:23–1:41:13), projected on these banners are images of totem poles—intricately carved wooden tree trunks that feature faces and bodies of people and creatures. In the second portion of the scene, (1:41:13–1:46:08), the banners resemble a forest—the vertical banners are brown with tree trunk patterns, while the circular banners at the top are green. In the final portion of the scene, (1:46:08–1:48:36) the banners undergo several different states. At the beginning of this part of the scene, bright orange and yellow flame-like patterns start to descend from the forest canopy down the tree trunks. Later (for instance, 1:46:42 and onwards), the projection and animations appear less like flames and more like glittering balls of light on the banners which are still identifiably a forest formation (brown trunks covered by the green canopy). By 1:47:02, the brown and green identifying the forest has disappeared and there are just glittering lights over

both the vertical banners and the circular banners in the stadium rafters, appearing almost like embers. At 1:48:05 the vertical banners turn completely white and drop dramatically to the floor, an artistic rendering which I refer to in this analysis as ashes.

As per the methodology that I am using for this analysis, I first consider each mode (or element of the mode in this case) on its own. The visual projections are the foregrounded element in this scene, and so I analyze them first. Taking into consideration these projections alone, there is not necessarily one clear message or narrative in this part of the visual mode. However, there are some interesting insights that can be drawn, as I compare the artistic choices that have been made here with the settler colonial values and ideologies that are revealed through the decolonial positioning I am taking in this dissertation. As a whole, the progression of totems, to trees, to flames/ashes may communicate some interesting information about how humanity relates to nature (particularly in the Canadian context)—through creativity (evidenced by the totem poles), through appreciation of its magnificence (by the large forest evoked in the middle section), and through destruction (via the fires in the final portion). As my analysis progresses, and more details are taken into consideration, I continue to question how the arrangement of these visual elements may contribute to the rehearsal of settler colonial values. In the close analysis of these projections that follows, I am particularly interested in the inclusion of the totem pole images, and the animated transition between totems and trees. Before turning to this close analysis, I will provide some of the explanatory information from the media guide about the nature of the projections used. I have chosen to include these descriptions here rather than in the section on texts because they are simply explanatory of the visual elements, rather than interpretive or additional texts.

According to the Media Guide, the totem poles depicted here are representative of totems

made by Indigenous cultures of the West Coast of what is now called British Columbia.⁹ In these cultures, totem poles served as markers of the “lineage, status and history of the owners by depicting the ancestors, crests, and heraldic creatures associated with their clans and families.”¹⁰ These differ from the “welcome poles” which had been used earlier in the ceremony as giant sculptures which rose from the floor with arms outstretched during the Four Host First Nations Welcome portion of the Opening Ceremony (see, for example, 18:20–19:31). Those welcome poles appeared to be carved out of ice and were designed to replicate welcome poles used by the Coast Salish people, which were usually “erected at the outskirts of a village or settlement” with “hinged arms” that could be moved up or down to indicate whether guests were welcome or not.¹¹ In the context of this portion of the ceremony however, what is being projected on the banners are totem poles, not welcome poles. As mentioned earlier in the description of the scene as a whole, the projections of the totem poles on the banners are animated in such a way that they appear to dissolve back into trees. That is, at one moment the banners feature images of totem poles, and then these images blur and become less distinct until the banners appear simply as tree trunks (1:41:08–1:41:19).

In the media guide, it is noted that both the images of the totem poles and the trees are based on art pieces by Emily Carr. “The totem poles begin to ‘cry,’ then become ‘painted totem poles, like the famous ‘Crying Totem Poles’ painted by Emily Carr, BC’s iconic painter. The totem poles change shape, becoming an old-growth forest, like the magnificent trees of Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island – again in the style of Emily Carr.”¹² Thus, the media guide explanations of these projections align with my own visual interpretation of these first two

⁹ Media Guide, 54.

¹⁰ Media Guide, 54.

¹¹ Media Guide, 35

¹² Media Guide, 54.

tableaus. It is in the third section that my interpretation differs from the media guide. The text from the media guide explains: “the forest dissolves into sparkling light on water.”¹³ At 1:46:09, the animations appear much more like flames, given their vibrant orange and yellow color. By 1:46:41, the animations have changed slightly and the twinkling pattern of lights on the horizontal banners at the top of the stadium appear like lights on water, which slowly descends the “tree trunks.” There is no reference in the media guide to the flames, or to the dramatic drop of the vertical banners that occurs at 1:48:04.

Critical Analysis of Projections

As the decolonial angle of this dissertation establishes, the primary purpose of anti-colonial efforts is Indigenous liberation, and for settlers, to relinquish land, power, and privilege.¹⁴ In analysing the role of settler colonialism in the visual elements here then, I am interested in the ways that these do the opposite—how they facilitate control of Indigenous identity and creativity, how they seek to maintain settler control over land and power. There are three primary ways in which the inclusion of these poles is problematic—first, that Emily Carr’s art was used, second, the literal erasure back into trees, and third, that within the context of the (settler) ballet dancers, the totems appear to exist solely for settler enjoyment/identity establishment (this will be discussed later in the section regarding the choreography). All of these factors contribute as well to the idea that the original Indigenous creators are absent—literally, and figuratively, in ways which echo the settler colonial goals of erasure and appropriation.

Although it appears that in “Sacred Grove” the organizers made an attempt to represent some of the Indigenous culture of the Pacific Northwest, the art which was used in the first two thirds of this scene was inspired by the work of Canadian artist Emily Carr, in particular, her

¹³ Media Guide, 56.

¹⁴ See the discussion of this in the Introductory Chapter.

paintings “Weeping Totem” for the totem poles, and, later, her forest paintings, such as “Western Forest” which inspired the tree projections. Emily Carr was a settler artist, much of whose work drew on the First Nations cultures of coastal BC. She was associated with the Group of 7 (a group of Canadian artists), although as a woman, was never fully invited to be part of that group. As a settler profiting from Indigenous resources, Carr herself had a mixed relationship with her work, once saying that she hated herself for “prostituting Indian art,”¹⁵ and yet at other times echoing what Robinson calls the “salvage paradigm” in which settlers attempted to save Indigenous art because they believed it to be at risk of disappearing.¹⁶ One of the problems with relying on settler art in this scene is that it rehearses misrepresentation of Indigenous culture, and disconnects the poles from the “cultural and spiritual significance” that they had for their creators—the Haida.¹⁷ According to the label for the painting at the Vancouver Art Gallery from the late 1990s, what is depicted in Carr’s painting is not a ‘crying’ totem at all, rather this totem represents a “sea-chief whose eyes drop out of their sockets at night.”¹⁸ The misrepresentation of the original intent of the Indigenous creators by Carr’s titling of the painting is made worse in the ceremony by the animations which create the impression that drops of water, i.e. tears, are falling down the totem poles (1:40:46–1:40:56). The label from the Vancouver Art Gallery further explains that the pole belonged to Gwiskunas, “a member of Those-born-at-Qadsgo-Creek lineage of the Raven division of the Haida.”¹⁹ It was a “house frontal pole” from T’annuu

¹⁵ Roy MacGregor, “From forgotten artists to unfulfilled agreements, native story a crying shame,” *The Globe and Mail*, published July 24, 2006, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/from-forgotten-artists-to-unfulfilled-agreements-native-story-a-crying-shame/article730889/>.

¹⁶ Lisa Baldissera, *Emily Carr: Life and Work*, (Toronto: Art Canada Institute, 2015), 8. Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 153.

¹⁷ Robinson, *Hungry Listening*, 222.

¹⁸ Karen Leslie Knutson, “Hanging Emily: Exhibition Strategies and Emily Carr” (University of British Columbia, 1999), 13.

¹⁹ Knutson, “Hanging Emily,” 13.

Llnagaay (eelgrass town, or Tanu) on Tanu Island.²⁰ The pole itself was relocated to Victoria, to the Royal British Columbia Museum in 1954, where a portion of it is still housed, along with a complete replica.²¹ According to Haida carver Jaalen Edenshaw, the meaning of the poles and the images on them is deeply connected to the original artists and contexts in which those poles were created. Edenshaw explains, “You would have actually had to have been at the pole raising and heard those stories, and then you can associate that pole and that figure with that history.”²² In both the choice of art used at this moment of the scene, and the animations used on and between the main artworks then, the settler mindset of appropriation and erasure is evident. Appropriation is evident in that Indigenous art is being used for the purpose of curating a national identity, and erasure, because both the art itself, and the original creators of the art are overlooked, ignored, or destroyed in the process. This treatment of Indigenous creativity is also evident in the choreography used in this scene and how it further portrays settler relationship to Indigeneity and the land, as I discuss later in this chapter.

Not only is the use of Emily Carr’s art a means of enforcing a settler interpretation onto the Indigenous totem poles, but the visual transition from totem poles to trees further demonstrates processes of erasure. The animation that occurs at around 1:41:14 erases the presence of the totem poles and the banners become trees. This dissolution of the totem poles echoes the erasure of Indigenous identity through the settler process that viewed Indigeneity as being part of nature. Eva Mackey describes how this process works in Canadian national identity formation: that Indigenous people are not always erased, but sometimes their presence is essential to the settler

²⁰ “T’annu’s Man with the Falling Eyes,” Royal BC Museum, 2023, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://totems.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/en/story/Tannu>.

²¹ Knutson, “Hanging Emily,” 13.

²² “T’annu’s Man with the Falling Eyes,” Royal BC Museum, 2023, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://totems.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/en/story/Tannu>.

narrative of progress and they are “idealised as nature itself.”²³ This echoes what Litt refers to as the displaced culture dilemma, in order to validate their position on the land, settlers must draw from and “emulate” the Indigenous peoples that they have sought to eliminate. Similarly, for a scene that lasts a total of over 8 minutes, that the totems were only present for the initial 50 seconds, is also illuminating. Indigenous presence and creativity are acknowledged briefly, but quickly moved on from, as the scene focusses on settler identity and transcendence. The mindset of extraction, which undergirds the process of settler colonialism is foregrounded in these choices. Like the analytic framework developed in Chapter Two asserts, in these settler nation building processes, it is still seen as valid and important to acknowledge Indigenous presence, but only on settler terms. In short, the content here appears inclusive, but it is governed by settler terms of engagement.

Introduction to Choreography and Choreography During Tableau 1

My interest in the choreography in this scene is not for the sake of choreography as such, but rather for how it positions the actors (and thus invites the audience) into relationship to the land, or nature. I am interested in the cultural effect that the dancers’ movements have on the national identity being performed and rehearsed in this space. Isolated from the music (for now) I investigate what the presence and movements of the dancers communicate about both their emotional state, and their positionality in relationship to the landscape that they appear in and are engaging with.

The second important visual element of “Sacred Grove” is the presence of and choreography of the dancers. In the first portion of the scene (while the projections are showing the totem poles) the choreography is very informal. The dancers, either in pairs or alone, enter

²³ Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 37, 39.

the space leaping and running. They then wander around the large stage appearing to take in the magnitude of the art that is before them, which at this point is the totems. The expressions on the faces of the dancers and the accompanying gestures imply that their emotional response to what they have “discovered” is joy, awe, and excitement. Take, for example, the pair of dancers that the camera focusses on from 1:41:02 to 1:41:15, as the camera follows their path across the stage, the pair gaze up in wonder at the sight of the totems before them, smiles spreading across their faces. By the time the camera view opens back out to encompass the whole stage, the totems have disappeared, and the audience sees a large forest depicted on the banners.

Choreography During Tableau 2

After the transition from totem poles to trees, this emotion of awe and joy continues into the intense contemporary ballet choreography that is featured throughout McLachlan’s song. The movements of the dancers throughout this portion of the scene are exuberant and celebratory. They leap and twirl with arms outstretched. The company of dancers cover the entire stage (e.g. 1:43:16), and, in their movements, they also travel across large portions of the stage. Through this choreography, it appears that the landscape is being treated as a resource to be mined for the pleasure of the dancers, as I will discuss in the section below on the critical analysis of this portion of the scene.

Choreography During Tableau 3

After “Fantasy Ballet” has ended, there is an immediate transition to “Adagio for Strings,” and the movements of the dancers portray a starkly different emotional state. While in the earlier portion of the scene it appears that there is joy and exuberance and awe based on the dancers’ expressions and movements, in this portion of the scene (beginning at 1:46:06) both the pace of movement and the amount of physical space the dancers engage with is drastically different. At

the beginning of this portion, the dancers begin crouched down beneath the flaming banners (1:46:13), kneeling on the stage floor. They slowly unfurl, with concerned expressions, looking up towards the ceiling. They repeat this pattern of physically rising and falling, almost in slow motion, separately, before moving closer together to form pairs. With arms flailing at first, some turn together, some perform lifts, before returning to face each other (1:47:10–1:47:37). It appears that the dancer's arms are at first extended in desperation, and then as they grasp one another their bodies tremble up and down as if they are weeping, heavy with grief—before they jump back in separation (1:47:45). They tremble back and forth on the ground, before a few select dancers are raised into the sky by aerial wires (1:48:10). The dancers who remain on the ground stand with both arms outstretched towards the ceiling. The stage darkens and the scene comes to an end.

Critical Analysis of Choreography

The big question that will impact the analysis of this scene, and relate the visual cues alone to the question of rehearsing settler colonialism is, what does this choreography communicate to the viewer about the nature of these characters? Are these dancers operating in the space, and, crucially, on the land that they are encountering, with a settler positionality? What does the identity of these characters, and the genre of art that they perform communicate about Canada's national identity? In the introduction chapter, I wrote about the settler gaze, or settler looking positionality. There, I noted that the settler gaze involves looking at the landscape as an object that can be possessed or consumed, for the benefit of the one looking at it.²⁴ That, I argue, is the process we see being undertaken through the choreography of the dancers here. In the initial portion of the scene, the expressions and movements of the dancers imply both a distance from,

²⁴ See Introductory Chapter of this dissertation; Jeanne van Eeden, "The Colonial Gaze: Imperialism, Myths, and South African Popular Culture," *Design Issues* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2004).

and an awe of the totem poles that they are observing. They wander cautiously, and yet joyously, into the land, as though it is theirs to discover, and theirs to consume, inhabit, and occupy. Their occupation of it is demonstrated as they scatter across the entire stage and take up the space with their bodies and movements. Crucially, in this scene, as in the last scene, the landscape is presented as empty. The remnants of a previous people are there (demonstrated by the use of totem poles) but the people themselves are absent, and their culture is presented as one which is disappearing, as demonstrated in the animations used on the banners discussed above. This technique occurs frequently in settler colonial activity.

Although they speak of bodies, not land, I would apply the words of Tsang and Eizadirad to how the dancers objectify the land in this scene: “The colonizing gaze normalizes a logic that justifies tokenism, exclusion, and violence.”²⁵ Taking both the choreography, and the visual treatment of the totem poles together, we can see how the visual mode reflects the colonizing gaze of “tokenism, exclusion and violence” here. Through their performance, the dancers both enact in themselves, and invite from the audience, an interaction with the land and with Indigenous creativity and presence that is tokenistic and exclusionary, and finally, violent, in the possession over and absencing of Indigenous peoples.

As described in the description of the choreography above, in the final tableau, the movements of the dancers communicate a journey from grief to transcendence. Although on its own this trajectory in the movements of the dancers does not provide much of significance here, the further implications of this will be discussed in the combined analysis section.

²⁵ H. L. J. Tsang and Ardavan Eizadirad, “Disrupting the Colonizing Gaze and Mobilizing for Systemic Decolonization,” in *Handbook of Curriculum Theory, Research and Practice*, ed. Peter Pericles Trifonas and Susan Jagger, Springer International Handbooks of Education (Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2023), 4.

Final Critical Analysis of Visual mode

I argue that the narrative that is communicated by the visual elements of this scene is one of erasure and absence. The visual transition of the banners from totems, to trees, to flames to ashes reduces Indigenous presence back into nature, which is then subsequently destroyed. Further, by using settler interpretations of Indigenous art, through highlighting the work of Emily Carr, Indigenous artists are overlooked, and settler interpretation is centered, denying Indigenous presence. In addition to these artistic elements, the presence of the dancers also reinforces these meanings. As Nathan Kalman-Lamb has also noted, the use of ballet in this scene serves as “a symbol of white European cultural heritage.”²⁶ In centering this dance form, the organizers are appealing to the Imperial heritage as they navigate creating a national identity within the displaced culture dilemma. The people who are centered here appear to be white, middle-class Canadians. The motions of the dancers on their own don’t provide a detailed narrative, beyond a movement from awe and celebration, to what appears to be grief, and finally, to transcendence. These interpretations will be reinforced as we discuss the additional modes. However, by their presence and overall overtaking of the stage (i.e. the landscape), they enact a settler possession of that landscape. Nathan Kalman-Lamb affirms that this “is the moment in which white Canada takes responsibility for the natural beauty of the country. Nature features just as prominently throughout the remainder of the cultural segments, as we are taken from the forest to the prairies and then back to the mountains. However, from this moment on, there is no longer a trace of Indigeneity in the performances.”²⁷ Although I agree with the first aspect of his statement here, Kalman-Lamb’s final comment is not entirely accurate and could perhaps be read as an aspect of

²⁶ Nathan Kalman-Lamb, “‘A Portrait of This Country’: Whiteness, Indigeneity, Multiculturalism and the Vancouver Opening Ceremonies,” *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 27 (2012), 13.

²⁷ Kalman-Lamb, “A Portrait of this Country,” 18.

erasure. To say there is “no trace of Indigeneity” in the remainder of the performances is to overlook the Indigenous peoples, and the references to Indigenous art that are included. For example, in the scene immediately following this one (to be analyzed in the next chapter) text from Pauline Johnson (an Indigenous author and poet) is used, a fiddler representing Métis fiddling is included and, in the final scene of the cultural portion, Shane Koyczan, an Indigenous poet, delivers a spoken word piece. If what Kalman-Lamb means by making this statement is that Indigeneity is incorporated but presented in a way that erases Indigenous identity, then yes, Indigenous presence and creativity is *almost* untraceable in these successive scenes. In contrast, to approach these scenes with a mind to Indigenous presencing (as discussed in Chapter Two) is to observe that Indigenous peoples are represented and acting in resurgence, though they continue to be erased and assimilated by the artistic choices that are made. In the next section of this chapter, I turn to an analysis of the texts that are incorporated in this scene and demonstrate how Indigenous identity and creativity is again appropriated into this ceremony, and how settler identity is prioritized.

Texts

The texts which form the interpretive material for this scene include both the descriptions of the scene from the media guide, the quotes that are narrated within the Opening Ceremony itself, and the lyrics of Sarah McLachlan’s song, “Ordinary Miracle.” In this section, I will address the material from the media guide first, and then the in-ceremony texts afterwards.

Texts external to the Ceremony

In addition to brief descriptions of several moments within the scene, the media guide gives an overall synopsis of this scene, and concludes it by stating that it “explores the transformational influence of nature, wildlife and Canada’s magnificent forests on its art and its

people.”²⁸ The description of the final choreography explains: “The forest dissolves into sparkling light on water. Ballet dancers are transformed by the forest’s beauty and grandeur. Eight performers transcend the physical ascending into the sky.”²⁹ These two texts, taken together, show that the intent of this scene is to portray a certain kind of relationship to nature and the land. The landscape here serves a utilitarian purpose in that it facilitates the transformation, and finally transcendence, of the dancers who are interacting with it. This is a fundamentally settler colonial logic.

Poetry and Song Lyrics within the Ceremony

As tableau 2 begins, Donald Sutherland narrates this quote from Indigenous author Chief Dan George: “The beauty of the trees, the softness of the air, the fragrance of the grass speaks to me, and my heart soars.” Dan George, whose given name was Geswanouth Slahoot, was a residential school survivor, and chief of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation from 1951 to 1963.³⁰ He wrote many books and poems throughout his life and had a significant acting career beginning in 1960. This excerpt comes from a longer poem that George wrote entitled, *My Heart Soars*. I argue that the inclusion of this quote reflects a settler colonial engagement with Indigenous art in several ways. First, that it is narrated by a settler voice—this removes Indigenous agency. Secondly, in that it is used within the ceremony for the purpose of settler identity formation and transcendence. And finally, and perhaps most importantly, that the organizers have included this quote without considering the broader implications of Chief Dan George’s life and work. To me, there is a blatant disjuncture here between how George’s words are being used in the ceremony, and what he stood for in his own life in relationship to Canadian nationalism. For instance,

²⁸ Media Guide, 54

²⁹ Media Guide, 56.

³⁰ Bennett McCardle, “Dan George,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/dan-george>.

George gave a speech at the Canadian Centenary of Confederation in 1967, entitled “Lament for Confederation.” In it, he decried the damage of colonialism on Indigenous peoples and their ways of life. In his speech, he chooses not to celebrate the centenary, but instead questions those celebrations, challenging the idea that the history of this land began at settler arrival, and speaking directly of the crushing impact of settler culture on his own life. For example, George articulated it this way: “The white man’s strange customs, which I could not understand, pressed down upon me until I could no longer breathe.”³¹ I strongly recommend reading (or listening to) his words in their entirety. I cannot include them in full here, but these few sentences are of particular relevance in relationship to the present scene: “Oh Canada, how can I celebrate with you this centenary, this hundred years? Shall I thank you for the reserves that are left to me of my beautiful forests?”³² There is a potency to hearing these words of Chief Dan George’s as we hear his take on how the beautiful forests have been replaced for him by reserves. As the settlers moved in (demonstrated via the ballet dancers) and took possession of the vast and beautiful landscape, Indigenous peoples were forced to live on reserves. This is not cause for celebration, or national pride, and George’s poem invites us to reconsider what is being presented in the ceremony as innocent. As these brief excerpts from his *Lament* demonstrate, Chief Dan George’s response to the celebration of Canadian nationhood was not one of approval or joy. The inclusion of the excerpt from his “My Heart Soars” as part of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony limits both his personal sovereignty, and the sovereignty of Indigenous people over the land and their relationships to it. Like Paul Litt suggested, the displaced culture of the settlers requires

³¹ “Chief Dan George’s Lament for Confederation,” *MONOVA – Museum and Archives of North Vancouver*, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://monova.ca/chief-dan-georges-lament-for-confederation/>.

³² “Chief Dan George’s Lament for Confederation,” *MONOVA – Museum and Archives of North Vancouver*, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://monova.ca/chief-dan-georges-lament-for-confederation/>.

them to envy and emulate the “organic relationship” that the Indigenous peoples have with the land, demonstrated in this scene by the appropriation of the words of Dan George’s poem.³³

The final textual element incorporated into this scene are the lyrics of Sarah McLachlan’s song “Ordinary Miracle.” Like the excerpt from Chief Dan George’s poem, these lyrics celebrate the beauty and power of nature. The lyrics were written by David Allan, David Stewart, and Glen Ballard.³⁴ The song originally appeared on the soundtrack of the 2006 film “Charlotte’s Web” during the closing credits. The lyrics refer to the changing of the seasons, describing elements of the weather, birds, and plants as “ordinary miracle[s].”³⁵ The bridge of the song positions the listeners and artist within the same category and as part of the “ordinary miracle.” In the context of the scene, these lyrics are sung by Sarah McLachlan during the “Fantasy Ballet.” They are aligned with the message of the intent of the scene that the media guide described—celebrating the transformations that nature does and also offers to humans.

Each of these texts exemplifies the reliance of the Canadian national identity on tropes of nature and landscape, just as Robinson asserted, and as Lowman and Barker explained was characteristic of settler colonial nationalism. Although in this particular scene it is not Canada as “North,” that is the most overt stereotype, there is still an overt reliance on the grandeur of the landscape to facilitate the possession/dispossession of Indigenous peoples that settler colonialism requires. Overall, each of the examples of text illustrate and amplify one another, and are clearly closely related to at least the first portion of visual elements we have seen. However, as my

³³ Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory,” 8.

³⁴ “Ordinary Miracle by Sarah McLachlan” *Songfacts*, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.songfacts.com/lyrics/sarah-mclachlan/ordinary-miracle>.

³⁵ “Ordinary Miracle,” *Genius.com*, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://genius.com/Sarah-mclachlan-ordinary-miracle-lyrics>.

analysis in the next section will demonstrate, the music may provide a contrast, or perhaps a disjuncture to the cohesive narrative that has been presented thus far.

Music

There are two primary musical inclusions in “Sacred Grove.” The first one, Sarah McLachlan’s song “Ordinary Miracle” was addressed in the previous section as text. In this section, it is further addressed musically and as the foundational material from which Dave Pierce composed his “Fantasy Ballet” which serves as the underscore for the majority of this scene. The second musical work included in this scene is Samuel Barber’s *Adagio for Strings*, which is the accompaniment for the second portion of the scene. I will also address some of the shorter excerpts of underscore.

Music During Tableau 1

At the opening of the scene, as the banners begin to display the totem poles, the orchestral accompaniment sets up the soundscape with a mournful quality. Beginning at 1:40:22, a minor mode (Eb minor) descending scale pattern is played by the upper strings. A wood flute then plays a slow, hollow sounding phrase above this. An ascending scale (1:40:53–) in the lower string accompaniment which starts on Ab (the dominant of Eb minor) creates the expectation that the accompaniment will return to Eb minor, but despite the ascending scale pushing towards the Eb minor tonic, the harmony shifts abruptly to C major. At 1:41:12 another ascending scale occurs. Overall, what is communicated here is a movement of emotion—from slow minor mode, with sparse strings and wood flute orchestration, emphasizing mournfulness to the joy, hope and anticipation of the unsettled major mode which features much fuller orchestration including brass and harp. On its own, this musical transition does not give much information. However, the

music and the visuals in combination in this short section enrich each other and reinforce the messages of each.

During the initial part of this short segment, the mournful melody accompanies the rising of the totem poles. When the wood flute melody plays, the camera close up focusses on the “tears” falling from the eyes of the figures in the totem pole, reinforcing the idea that these are tears rather than the eyes themselves, as the original Indigenous story explains. The use of the wood flute as a brief solo instrument in this section could be seen as an attempt to reference Indigenous culture, where the music of flutes is common. However, it is the orchestra that operates as the overriding interpretive musical engine in this portion of the scene. This orchestral accompaniment communicates to the audience the same kind of misinterpretation of Indigenous culture that the visuals in this moment did on their own. In addition to the mournful music which lends credence to the interpretation that the figures are crying rather than having their eyes falling out, the visual erasure of the totems into trees is echoed by the aural erasure of the wood flute, which disappears from the soundscape as the orchestral accompaniment is foregrounded and shifts to the major mode. Just as in the visual mode, it is the settler interpretation of Indigenous culture that takes precedence, and eventually entirely supersedes Indigenous creativity. These artistic choices are directly aligned with the logics of erasure, and the intention to stay that are constitutive of the settler colonial narrative, as Wolfe, Veracini and others have identified (as discussed in the Introductory Chapter).

Music During Tableau 2

The major mode quality and upbeat tempo of Sarah McLachlan’s pop song reinforce the joy and celebration that is characteristic of the early portion of this scene.³⁶ As mentioned above,

³⁶ McLachlan’s song starts at 1:41:44.

“Ordinary Miracle” was composed in 2006 by Dave Stewart and Glen Ballard for the animated children’s film *Charlotte’s Web*. In the film, the song is used as background music during the closing credits. In the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony, “Ordinary Miracle” starts subtly, with just McLachlan singing and playing the piano, then the orchestra joins in. After singing the song through once, McLachlan stops playing and singing and the orchestra takes over, performing Dave Pierce’s extended work “Fantasy Ballet” which draws on some of the main musical themes from song. Pierce’s orchestration aids in the celebratory nature of the work featuring brass fanfare, percussion, and strings whirling enthusiastically (e.g. 1:45:02). After almost two minutes, the music comes to an abrupt stop, and McLachlan sings a tag of the final line of the chorus. The final note that she sings unaccompanied becomes a sustained chord out of which Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* begins. Not considering the lyrics, the celebratory major mode of McLachlan’s song and David Pierce’s “Fantasy Ballet” built on the same musical themes communicates joy and enthusiasm.

Music During Tableau 3

The second large musical element, however, provides contrast and thus a point of disjuncture through which to interrogate the underlying ideologies that drive the Canadian national identity being constructed here. The piece used in the second portion of the scene is American composer Samuel Barber’s *Adagio for Strings*, which he wrote as an arrangement of the second movement of his String Quartet, composed in 1936. The piece is internationally well known and has been featured prominently in many public events and film scores. Most significantly, it was played following the radio broadcast announcements of the deaths of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1945 and John F Kennedy in 1963. It was also used and performed widely both on TV and in concerts after the events of September 11, 2001. It appears in many

films, most notably, throughout the 1986 war film *Platoon*. Taking these as examples of the most common use of this piece, it is apparent that the primary association that this work has come to embody is one of grief. As Luke Howard summarizes “in each of these movies, the *Adagio* underscores scenes of loss, sacrifice, and tragedy. So pervasive did this association become that when the *Adagio* has been used in recent films to accompany scenes other than a tragic death, the choice of music has seemed both to critics and viewers as inept and inappropriate.”³⁷ The choice of this piece for the Opening Ceremony, then, in a segment designed to celebrate the magnificence of Canada’s landscape is, initially, confusing to say the least. In analysing the inclusion of the work in the context of this scene, I discuss three possible interpretations, each reliant on the relationship of the music to other factors in or surrounding the ceremony.

If the music is to be viewed as one which communicates grief, it could be associated with the tragic event that occurred the day before the Opening Ceremony. At least two contemporary commentators related the use of this music to the death of Georgian luger Nodar Kumaritashvili who died in a training run the day before the Opening Ceremony.³⁸ However, the music and choreography would have been chosen and rehearsed for months in advance, so the association with his tragic death is shockingly coincidental. Thomas Larson writes, “While it is true that an Olympic athlete died the first day, making Barber’s elegy suddenly appropriate, programming the piece for that purpose was obviously not intended.”³⁹ Another commentator expressed

³⁷ Luke Howard, “The Popular Reception of Samuel Barber’s ‘Adagio for Strings,’” *American Music* 25, no. 1 (2007), 56.

³⁸ Frank Fitzpatrick, “Opening Ceremony for Winter Olympics in Vancouver,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Feb 13 2010, https://www.inquirer.com/philly/news/homepage/20100213_Opening_ceremony_for_Winter_Olympics_in_Vancouver.html; “A night of mourning as Winter Games officially begin,” *Bild*, Feb 13 2010. <https://www.bild.de/news/bild-english/vancouver-winter-games-officially-begin-with-night-of-mourning-11460774.bild.html>.

³⁹ Thomas Larson, *The Saddest Music Ever Written: The Story of Samuel Barber’s Adagio for Strings* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2010), 253.

confusion (and seemingly, the audience response) to the inclusion of the piece, making reference to its use in the film *Platoon*, “then, in the only part of the night that seemed to me to fall quite flat, to Samuel Barber’s ‘Adagio For Strings.’ These Canadians, they remember how sad it was when Willem Dafoe died in *Platoon*.”⁴⁰ It was indeed this confusion, or in multimodal analysis terms, the disjuncture between the music and the intent of the scene that sparked my interest in continuing with this research for my dissertation.

In a less convincing interpretation, one could view the music as relating more closely to the images on the banners and construct a story that communicates the grief at the destruction of forests through fire. This interpretation, however, doesn’t work well because it contradicts the media guide’s assertion that it is light on the banners and not flames, and it also does not connect well with the idea of transcendence as the dancer’s movements evolve.

The final, and in my view, most satisfying interpretation is that the organizers chose this piece of music for its perceived “transcendent” quality as a piece of Western Art music. Larson goes on to explain, “at such ceremonial events, the *Adagio* is being used more and more for its familiar grandiosity, its ability to ennoble a spectacle, and not necessarily to forge a link between tragedy and grief.”⁴¹ I argue then, that the organizers used Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* here to represent transcendence, and, as Larson suggested, to “ennoble” their spectacle. Such a reliance on western classical music to elevate (in both senses of the word) is reflective of a Eurocentric, settler colonial view of music. The use of Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* here—a work whose primary association is usually one of grief, not transcendence—rehearses a Eurocentric, settler colonial view of musical identity by relying on the belief that it is western art music which is

⁴⁰ Paul Wells, “The Opening Ceremonies: To see ourselves as others see us,” *Maclean’s*, Feb 13, 2010, <https://macleans.ca/politics/ottawa/the-opening-ceremonies-to-see-ourselves-as-others-see-us>.

⁴¹ Larson, *The Saddest Music Ever Written*, 253.

most potent for transcendent purposes. Music thus serves the aims of settler colonial nationalism in this scene by dismissing the validity of other types of music and playing into the aesthetic universalism that Mignolo asserted is characteristic of colonialism.

Analysis of Combined Narrative

This scene is a complex conglomeration of some seemingly disparate elements, and there is not one interpretive result for the scene as a whole. Rather, each tableau has a different multimodal result, and then the analysis of the scene as a whole can be discussed (see Table 4.2 below).

Tableau: Mode:	Totems (1:40:23– 1:41:13)	Trees (1:41:13–1:46:08)	Flames/Ashes (1:46:08–1:48:36)
Visual 1 (Banners)	Totems	Trees	Flames/Ashes
Visuals 2 (Choreography)	Alberta Ballet – mostly walking and pointing.	Alberta Ballet – exuberant, covering most of the stage	Alberta Ballet – closer to center stage, physical ascension at climax.
Texts	No text	Chief Dan George quotation; McLachlan “Ordinary Miracle” lyrics	‘transform’ ‘transcend’ (from Media Guide)
Music	Orchestral Underscore	McLachlan “Ordinary Miracle” and Pierce, “Fantasy Ballet”	Barber, <i>Adagio for Strings</i>
Multimodal Result	Disjuncture	Amplification	Surface-level disjuncture, overall amplification

Table 4.2 Division of “Sacred Grove” into Tableaus with added Multimodal Result Row

Based on the content discussed above, I suggest that the analytic result of the first tableau indicates a disjuncture. In that tableau, two elements of Indigenous creativity (the totems and Chief Dan George's poetry) are juxtaposed against settler presence and music. To state this in a way that privileges that art and presences Indigenous peoples and cultures, the white settlers exploring and discovering the totem poles feel out of place. Instead of this disjuncture, the organizers of the ceremony could have had Indigenous people present in this scene and amplified a narrative of Indigenous flourishing and reclamation.

In the second tableau, there is overall amplification between the modes—each mode separately communicates a message of joy or delight in nature, in alignment with the settler colonial goals of seeking transcendence through nature, as well as possessing gatekeeping it for their own purposes. This message continues in the third tableau, although the mood is no longer joy. There is a micro disjuncture between the use of a piece of American classical music which has been primarily associated with grief, and the Canadian settler context of transcendence. At times, the choreography and the music are aligned in the message of grief, but later there is a move to transcendence—in both the physical ascendance of some of the dancers, and in the understanding of the role of this music within broader stereotypes of western classical music. The third tableau, then, is really about a trajectory from grief to transcendence. As a whole, this scene rehearses significant aspects of settler colonial narrative—privileging settler possession of the landscape, and the erasure of Indigenous presence. Although there are moments of disjuncture in this scene, these moments are not presented in ways which upset the settler status-quo. As indicated by the analytic framework developed in the second chapter of this dissertation, when efforts of inclusion are subsequently erased, this is immediate evidence of coloniality—as I argued was used in the visual animations incorporated into this scene. As a whole, this scene

makes very few efforts of inclusion, and thus demonstrates a colonizing aesthetic impulse (to use Robinson's phrase) which reinforces the settler narratives of an empty landscape which can be freely possessed by settlers (here represented by the dancers).

Conclusions of Chapter Four

In this chapter, I have discussed the contributions that the music, visuals, and texts in the second scene of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony have made to rehearsing settler colonial values and ideology. This scene, entitled "Sacred Grove," embodies a settler relationship to land that has been stolen from Indigenous peoples by depicting Indigenous peoples and their culture as a necessary part of Canadian national identity formation, but simultaneously isolated and disappearing—for instance, through the erasure of the totem poles and the settler interaction with them. The artistic choices made here treat landscape as a resource to be enjoyed and gatekept by settlers, incorporating three types of "fine art" as a means of "elevating" the national identity and claiming national identity status alongside other such imperial nations, echoing settler displaced culture theory. Each of the semiotic modes center settler identity and experience, and further invite the audience to engage with the landscape in ways that reflect settler colonial values. Visually, the evolution of the projections featured on the banners, and the presence and positioning of the actors of the Alberta Ballet present a narrative of erasure and settler transcendence. Although the media guide gave no commentary about the identity of these actors, I argue that they embodied a settler positionality through use of the settler gaze. In the texts, which accompany this scene, Indigenous identity is appropriated and recontextualized without consideration for the intent of the speaker (in this portion of the ceremony, Chief Dan George). Settler identity is further centered in the text via the use of the concept of "transcendence" as the main goal of the character engagement with nature. Finally,

the instrumentation choices during the first tableau echo the visual erasure that was evident in the animations on the banners. During the second tableau, the music (both Sarah McLachlan's song "Ordinary Miracle" and Dave Pierce's *Fantasy Ballet*), creates the sense that the landscape is there for the dancers to enjoy. Finally, the use of Samuel Barber's piece *Adagio for Strings* during the third tableau, affirms the goals of the organizers in this scene in their reliance on it as a work which reflects the stereotype of western art music as one which can facilitate transcendence. The practices of erasure and extraction embodied in the artistic choices made in this scene demonstrate Robinson's concern that landscape-based tropes are far from benign. Approaching this scene with an anti-colonial posture illuminates the need for settlers to relinquish our grasp on land, and ask humbly how to be good guests.

Chapter Five – Extractive Logics in Multicultural Celebration

In this chapter, I turn my attention to a scene from the Opening Ceremony in which music serves as the main focus. This scene, entitled “Rhythms of The Fall,” features several of Canada’s various fiddling traditions. This is the third of six scenes in the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, and it immediately follows Sacred Grove (which was discussed in the previous chapter). While this scene purports to celebrate one aspect of the diversity of music in Canada by highlighting a variety of fiddle styles that have evolved in Canadian culture, I argue that this diversity is subverted by the visual associations that are made in the costume design and choreography choices, and also in the way that the music is arranged. Diversity, particularly expressed through the narrative of multiculturalism, is managed and celebrated in this scene as a primary and honorable characteristic of Canada’s national identity. However, as the multimodal analysis reveals, and the application of a decolonial critique exposes, this management of diversity serves as a further expression of the settler colonial mindset.

Building from the analytic framework I put together and discussed in Chapter Two, I align my interpretations in this chapter with the work of Dylan Robinson and Glen Coulthard in identifying the operation of “inclusionary music” and the “politics of recognition,” respectively. Like Robinson and Coulthard have articulated, inclusion and recognition are tools which, at the surface level, provide evidence of improving relationships between settlers and Indigenous peoples, and the state and Indigenous peoples, while at the structural level, they tend to leave the colonial structure intact. As many other critics of multiculturalism have argued, this management of difference—which is meted out in Canada specifically through the multicultural project (and in the years following the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony, an emphasis on reconciliation)—usually serves to reinforce and center whiteness. Eva Mackey’s assertions are particularly

instructive for the analysis to come in this chapter. In observing Canada's nation-building project through a variety of historical and cultural events, Mackey writes,

cultural diversity is integrated, assimilated, appropriated, erased, tolerated and managed depending on the needs of the project (including the desire for identity). In this construction, it is the definers of the project – usually white and most often British settlers – who authorise and define similarities and differences. They are the unmarked, unhyphenated, and hence normative, *Canadian*-Canadians who are thus implicitly constructed as the authentic and *real* Canadian people, while all others are hyphenated and marked as *cultural*.¹

Mackey's work draws attention to the way diversity is managed for the purpose of defining the dominant and normative group. Although cultural diversity is included and acknowledged, its existence is managed in such a way that it implies a hierarchy of cultures within Canada, centering a particular kind of Canadian, while minoritizing and forcing to the periphery those who are otherwise "marked" or "hyphenated." Like other ceremonies and spectacles that Mackey has observed, I see the arrangement of diversity in this scene as concluding with a message that "defined white unmarked Canadianness as normative."² This contributes to the settler colonial nation building process by centering the white settler identity, and, as I have referred to elsewhere, follows the settler colonial "mindset of extraction" by appropriating and valuing diversity not for its own sake, but for selfish definition.

Through the multimodal analysis that I pursue in this chapter, I observe how the multicultural emphasis in Canada's national identity serves to manage difference and center whiteness. While a number of different fiddle styles are incorporated, there is one that is presented as superseding them all. This hierarchical arrangement of identity is expressed in the arrangement of the music, the choreography of the main featured characters and performers, and

¹ Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 89 (emphasis in original).

² Mackey, *House of Difference*, 92.

the costume design. In this chapter, as in previous chapters, I analyze each of the semiotic modes separately, before bringing them together for the final analysis. Overall, as in previous chapters, I find that the aims and underlying logic of settler colonialism are prevalent within the artistic choices that have been made in this scene. Before moving on to the detailed analysis of words, music, and visual elements, I begin with an overview description of the scene and a brief discussion of the different representations and constructions of identity that are at work here.

Scene Overview and Description

I have chosen to focus on only the latter portion of this scene. As a whole, the scene lasts for approximately 13 minutes (1:48:37–2:01:01), but the pace of the narrative and the drama is such that I don't need to devote equal attention to all portions of the scene. That being said, while it is only the second portion of this scene that I will analyze in detail, the first part of the scene (1:48:37–1:51:22) provides some important context for the musical and narrative content that comes later.

The scene opens as an orange moon descends from the ceiling in the center of the stadium. Shortly after, a canoe descends in front of the moon. Inside the canoe, a character dressed in leather and plaid, with a red cape, holds a violin. As the canoe comes to rest in midair, the shadow of the fiddler (who stands in the canoe) is visible on the moon. Projected on the floor is a design of what appears to be Celtic knots within a cross shape (1:49:43). The voice of Donald Sutherland narrates the following quotation: “know by the thread of music woven through this fragile web of cadences I spin, that I have only caught these songs, since you voiced them upon your haunted violin – Pauline Johnson” (1:49:43–1:49:58). According to the media guide, the canoe and fiddler reference the “Quebec Folktale” *La Chasse-Galerie* (or *The Flying Canoe*).³

³ Media Guide, 57.

Although the folktale is referred to here, neither the main public program nor the ceremony itself provide a summary of the story for their audiences. There is, however, a summary of the story in the media guide.⁴ The origins of this folktale are uncertain, and it may actually have an Indigenous origin.⁵ The story itself tells the tale of a group of voyageurs or early settler transporters, who, having drunk a little too much at their New Year's Eve celebrations, determine that they would be willing make a deal with the devil for their souls if they could only be back in Montreal with their families. According to the tale, the devil appears with his canoe, and controls a storm with his fiddle as they all fly back in the canoe to Montreal. The reference to this myth by the inclusion of the fiddler in the canoes establishes the importance of fiddle music for settler (and Indigenous) cultures that is portrayed in the latter portion of the scene. As the fiddler in the canoe "air-fiddles" to the music that begins, Canadian artist Loreena McKennitt sang and played her song, *The Old Ways* on the music stage (1:49:59–1:51:21). During the song, the fiddler and his shadow appear to have a duel, while dancers gather on the floor below. The devil fiddler figure tosses his red cape to the ground and the projection on the stage floor changes from the Celtic knot pattern to red maple leaves. The devil fiddler and his canoe return to the sky, and the attention of the viewers is drawn to the central circular raised stage where a Quebecois fiddler begins the festivities (1:51:22).

After the folktale set up of this scene, the scene turns into a showcase of various fiddle cultures from across Canada, with dancers covering the stage. Each solo fiddler ascends the raised circular stage in turn, attempting, as the media guide explains, to "top" the performance of

⁴ Media Guide, 58.

⁵ "Enchanted Canoe," Canada's History, October 27, 2015, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://www.canadahistory.ca/explore/transportation/enchanted-canoe>, I first heard the story of The Flying Canoe from my friend Cassandra Chapman.

the previous fiddler (1:51:22–1:53:55).⁶ They are surrounded on this central raised stage by other dancers and tappers, and on the main floor by a whole host of dancers and fiddlers. The scene moves towards the climax as all the fiddlers return to the stage and play together. Suddenly, they disappear and the featured dancer, Brock Jellison, referred to in the media guide as the “hero tapper” takes the stage (1:54:48). More dancers on the main floor take up the tap dance he has begun. Eventually, a new fiddler, Ashley McIsaac, takes over the top level of the central stage. As his piece finishes, the scene appears to come to an end and all the dancers collapse to the floor. However, there is a reprise of the main fiddle piece, and the dancing continues. The five previously featured fiddlers join the dancers on the main floor, alongside Jellison and MacIsaac. As they continue to play and dance, the choreography positions the 5 fiddlers behind Jellison and McIsaac and the scene finally comes to a close.

Now that I have given a brief overview of the scene, I will discuss each mode independently before bringing their narratives together in the final analysis. In this chapter, I will draw attention to the narratives and hierarchies constructed by each mode through a close examination of each element, starting with the texts from the media guide which provide framing for the scene. In the visual mode, my analysis focusses on the choreography and costume design. In the musical mode, I will draw conclusions based on the songs chosen—both pre-existing and newly-composed, and the organization of those songs within the scene. Informed by the Mackey quote included above, my central goal in this chapter is to understand how a particular kind of Canadian identity is being constructed through the management of difference. I argue, building from Coulthard and Robinson, that this management of difference is an expression of the extractive mindset of colonialism.

⁶ Media Guide, 59.

A Note About Identity

In this chapter, it is important to make a distinction between the characters that are being presented and the actual identities of the people involved; I am not making any assumptions about their gender identity, or their cultural identity. The distinction between a character that is portrayed and the actor or musician portraying them is not made consistently in the media guide. Visually and audibly in the ceremony itself the audience is not provided with any details about the fiddlers or their identities. It is only from the media guide (and thus, presumably the ceremony commentary provided in each broadcast) that their identities would be discussed. For the five individual fiddlers, I have chosen not to discuss whether their background is associated with the fiddle style they are representing, thus I speak of it in those terms—that they are *representing* a particular fiddle style. Similarly, although the media guide identifies Brock Jellison as the hero tapper, it is the character “the hero tapper” whose identity is most important in this scene. Thus, when speaking about the identity of the hero tapper, I am not concerned with how Jellison identifies, but how the identity of the hero tapper as a character is presented. In contrast, the final fiddler, Ashley MacIsaac, is not presented as a character but as himself, and so I discuss him as a performer in the ceremony and not as a character that is created, and more importantly, what his identity (and how that identity is named) communicates. Similar to my discussions of identity of performers and characters in the previous two analytic chapters, what I am also interested in within the present analyses is how the characters portray or embody a settler positionality, that is, do they engage with Indigenous peoples, other minoritized groups, and with the land in ways that reflect the ideologies of settler colonialism, or in ways that upturn such dynamics.

Texts

The first portion of my analysis will draw attention to the texts which are used to provide framing for the scene. Unlike the previous scenes I have analyzed, the portion of the scene that I am focusing on in this chapter has no in-ceremony texts. Both instances of text in “Rhythms of the Fall” occur in the first portion of the scene—the quotation from Pauline Johnson, and a brief segment of lyrics in Loreena McKennitt’s song. There is no in-ceremony text in the second part of the scene which is the focus of my analysis in this chapter, aside from one brief enthusiastic shout of “C’est ooh la la” by the first fiddler, representing Quebecois fiddle culture. Thus, most of the important words which aid my analysis of this second portion of the scene come from the Media Guide.

Just like the inclusion of the reference to the folktale *La Chasse Gallerie*, I argue here that the inclusion of the quote from the work of Pauline Johnson serves to emphasize the importance of the violin as an element of Canadian culture. The quotation, narrated by Donald Sutherland, is: “know by the thread of music woven through this fragile web of cadences I spin, that I have only caught these songs, since you voiced them upon your haunted violin” (1:49:42–1:49:59). This quote is taken from the poem “Autumn’s Orchestra” written by Tekahionwake, also known by her English name Pauline Johnson, who was a writer and performer of both Mohawk and European heritage, who lived and worked during a crucial time in the development of Canadian national identity. Rick Monture explains how Johnson navigated this tension: “Conscious of her unique identity as a Mohawk/English poetess involved in the process of literary nation building, she once wrote that ‘There are those who think they pay me a compliment in saying that I am just like a white woman. My aim, my joy, my pride is to sing the glories of my own people’ (qtd.

in Keller 5).⁷ Like the poem by Chief Dan George used in the second scene of the cultural portion, this excerpt isolates Johnson's words from her broader work and denies her Indigenous identity. Despite the fact that at times Johnson's perspectives about the Canadian nation were contradictory (for instance, although she identified with Iroquois sovereignty, she also viewed that sovereignty within a Canadian state), the appropriation of this poem in the service of national identity building while omitting facts about Johnson's Indigenous identity and heritage is an act of erasure, and contributes to the furthering of settler colonialism that I have emphasized consistently in my analyses.⁸

Johnson's life and work also demonstrates that Indigenous opposition to Canadian nationalism and the stereotyping that has gone along with it is not only a recent phenomenon. For instance, in an 1892 article, Johnson decries the stereotypical depiction of "the Indian girl" in literature, claiming that the term "Indian" communicates as little as the term "European."⁹ In stark contrast to the excerpt featured in the ceremony, we can consider her 1885 poem, "Cry From an Indian Wife." Monture explains that this work of Johnson's "is noteworthy not only for its display of anger at the violence inflicted on the Native peoples of Canada, but also because it is one of the first such pieces written from a Native perspective to a white audience."¹⁰ Although in this poem, the speaker is at times sympathetic to the feelings of the white families, she is also explicit about Indigenous presence on the land, and the damage that colonialism has done.

They but forget we Indians owned the land
From ocean unto ocean; that they stand
Upon a soil that centuries ago

⁷ Rick Monture, "'Beneath the British flag': Iroquois and Canadian nationalism in the work of Pauline Johnson and Duncan Campbell Scott," *Essays on Canadian Writing*, no. 75 (2002), 119. Cites Betty Keller, *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson*, (Toronto: Douglas, 1981).

⁸ Monture, "Beneath the British flag," 123.

⁹ Monture, "Beneath the British flag," 124.

¹⁰ Monture, "Beneath the British flag," 128.

Was our sole kingdom and our right alone.¹¹

Johnson explicitly advocates for Indigenous sovereignty in this excerpt. A position that is starkly conflicted and contrasted by the use of her other work in the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony. My brief analysis here of the contradiction between the excerpt of Johnson's work that was selected for the ceremony, and the content of her other work demonstrates again the conflict that is at work in constructions of Canadian national identity. Settlers are reliant on Indigenous creativity to assert their own culture as distinct from the imperium (see discussions of this in the previous chapter), but they also have the long-term goal of eliminating those same Indigenous peoples so as to justify their position on the land. The inclusion of this seemingly innocuous quote from an Indigenous author, whose Indigeneity is not referenced in the Vancouver Opening Ceremony, and whose commitment to Indigenous sovereignty is denied by the choice of this particular excerpt from her work demonstrates the processes of settler colonial erasure and extraction.

As mentioned above, there are no further lyrics or texts incorporated into the scene itself, however, the explanatory texts from the media guide are instructive for the present analysis. The synopsis provided by the media guide for this scene reads "in the third cultural segment we experience the spectacular colours of a Canadian fall and explore this country's amazing fiddling traditions. These musical traditions have inspired a violin nation – a symphony made up of many parts that makes a richer composition together than apart."¹² This quotation introduces the fact that Canada has a number of fiddling traditions, which will be explored and highlighted through the performance in this scene. As the folktale featured earlier in the scene and the Pauline

¹¹ E. Pauline Johnson, "A Cry from an Indian Wife," Lines 21-24. Originally published in *The Week*, June 18, 1885. *CanLit Guides*, accessed June 6, 2024, <https://canlitguides.ca/canlit-guides-editorial-team/poetry-and-racialization/a-cry-from-an-indian-wife-1885-by-e-pauline-johnson-tekahionwake-and-racialization/>.

¹² Media Guide, 57.

Johnson poem underscore, this part of the ceremony is about curating the image of a “violin nation,” meant to highlight the impact of fiddle music within Canadian culture. As in other stereotypical statements about Canadian identity, the idea of the country as a mosaic made up of individual parts is a common one. The conclusion of this text though, emphasizes togetherness and unity over and above the importance of the individual pieces, referring to the nation as a “symphony.” The variety of fiddle cultures are acknowledged, but the emphasis from the very beginning of the scene underscores that these diverse cultures are of more value in their contribution to a unified whole than they are independently. This type of rhetoric echoes the resource extraction model of settler colonialism and reflects the problems of official multiculturalism that Mackey (and others) have identified (as discussed in preceding chapters). In the expression of Canadian national identity discussed in this text, Canada’s multicultural “others” are featured and valued solely for the purpose of contributing to the prominence of the overarching cultural group, that is “the symphony” named in this quote. In the other modes that I analyze in the sections below, I continue to observe how this practice of foregrounding diversity for the sake of claiming Canadian superiority is evident in the artistic choices made in the costuming, the arrangement of the music, and the placement of the actors on stage. Further, I argue that these choices are reflective of the extractive mindset of colonialism that continues to plague representations of Canadian national identity. Before moving on to the discussion of these other modes, I address the other element of text from the media guide and the meaning it provides for this scene—the naming of the fiddlers and other characters involved.

There is an important distinction in the media guide between how the individual fiddlers are named, and how the other two characters are represented. The media guide refers to each of the first five successive fiddlers by the fiddle culture they represent. Appearing in order, these

are Quebecois, West Coast, Métis, “Down East” and Prairie. The names of the performers are: André Brunet, Daniel Lapp, Sierra Noble, Samantha Robichaud, and April Verch.¹³ It is unclear from the ceremony or from the media guide whether these individuals share the heritage they are representing, or merely assume that style of fiddling for the present event.¹⁴ These individual fiddlers are accompanied on stage by a host of other fiddlers and tappers, but it is these 5 who are featured as soloists on the raised central portion of the stage. After these five fiddlers, a solo tapper is introduced. This tap dancer, Brock Jellison, plays a character that is named in the media guide as “the hero tapper.”¹⁵ Shortly after that, the final fiddler joins, listed in the media guide as “Canadian electronic violinist,” Ashely MacIsaac. I argue that the use of the term “hero” here to describe this featured character provides some insightful connotations for the construction of Canadian national identity. The term “hero” carries with it implications of saviorism and supremacy, ultimate and ideal. There is nothing further in the media guide or in the program to indicate why this character is given the title “hero.”¹⁶ However, this naming illustrates the importance of this figure, and his centrality amongst the other characters who are named here. As James Snead’s work articulates, the presence of glorified white heroes in film holds semiotic value which holds implications for the “elevation and mythification of whites.”¹⁷ This aligns with what Jackie Hogan has observed about Olympic opening ceremonies in general, that women and ethnic minorities tend to be marginalized. For example, in the Salt Lake City Opening Ceremony, that White males “personified both humanity/America...reveals the extent to which White male perspectives and experiences are still dominant in discourses of American

¹³ Media Guide, 57, 59.

¹⁴ As mentioned in the section above on identity, it’s not my role here to assume or question the identity of the performers, but rather to interrogate the framing that they are being subjected to within the context of this scene.

¹⁵ Media Guide, 60.

¹⁶ He is not referred to as “hero” in the Opening Ceremony itself, or in the main public program.

¹⁷ James A. Snead, *White Screens, Black Images: Hollywood from the Dark Side* (London: Routledge, 2016), 142.

identity.”¹⁸ Both the Sydney 2000 Olympics Opening Ceremony and the Salt Lake City 2002 Opening Ceremony featured a “hero” character, (a “hero girl” and a “hero child” respectively,) both of whom were white.¹⁹ The presence and naming of the hero tapper at Vancouver 2010 continues a pattern in settler colonial nations to feature a (usually white) figure as the “hero” who is thus representative of the nation itself. In a later portion of this chapter, where I address the visual elements of this scene, I discuss the further implications of the hero tapper’s presence and what is communicated about his identity through the costume he wears and his positioning on stage throughout the latter portion of this scene.

In addition to the hero tapper, a final fiddler is featured—Ashley MacIsaac. Unlike each of the previous fiddlers who is identified with a particular regional or cultural style of fiddling, MacIsaac is, to use Mackey’s term, “unmarked,” being referred to simply as “Canadian.” By implication, it is MacIsaac, who as the Canadian fiddler, has mastered all of the other styles, blending them together, and not needing to be identified by any particular one. Just like the claims made by the nationalist composers I discussed in the first chapter, the ability to master all other styles and merge them into something that is then claimed to be more original, or more authentic, is used as means of claiming nationalist supremacy and then universality. As Richard Dyer notes, “whites have come to represent what is ordinary, neutral, even universal.”²⁰ In highlighting this narrative, I argue that these descriptive texts point to a treatment of diversity that is extractive, and which ultimately serves to center a white Canadian norm. In these descriptive texts from the media guide, it is the “Canadian” fiddler who is presented as

¹⁸ Jackie Hogan, “Staging The Nation: Gendered and Ethnicized Discourses of National Identity in Olympic Opening Ceremonies,” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 27, no. 2 (2003), 116.

¹⁹ Cath Ellis, “The Possessive Logic of Settler-Invader Nations in Olympic Ceremonies,” *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 10, no. 2 (2012), 19, 22.

²⁰ Richard Dyer, *White: Twentieth Anniversary Edition*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2017), xvi.

superseding all the other more particular regional style representatives; an embodiment of Mackey’s “Canadian-Canadian,” while all the other fiddlers remain sidelined, or “marked.” This hierarchical arrangement expresses the problems of the politics of recognition that occur when representation becomes an end in itself, and the terms of engagement are not addressed. In the analysis that continues, I demonstrate how this logic underlies not only the texts, but also the music, and the visuals.

In addition to the characters themselves who are presented in this way, the description of the musical excerpts follows the same trend. The media guide describes the conclusion of this scene with the line: “the momentum builds as all of the performers merge their rhythms together during a hoedown based on the old Canadian standard *Maple Sugar*.”²¹ Just like in the opening quotation describing the scene, the emphasis within this excerpt affirms the value of togetherness—that the rhythms of the individuals are merged together, blurring their unique identities into the “Canadian.” The use of the term ‘standard’ in this description provides an additional level of insight. While it is a technical musical term that refers to how a particular composition becomes part of a canonic repertoire in popular music genres, the more common meaning of the term as in the standard against which other things are measured reinforces a settler Canadian mentality—the other musical excerpts are thus positioned as peripheral to, and “less Canadian” than this work. This musical choice (as I will discuss in the following section), and the way it is written of in these texts operates in alignment with the overarching observations of this chapter—that diversity is managed in such a way that centers those who have the power to define and leaves that power within their hands. In the words of Coulthard and Robinson, what is being articulated here is a “politics of recognition” and example of “inclusionary music.” We

²¹ Media Guide, 59.

will return to these texts in the discussion of the musical arrangements below, and again in the final analysis.

Based on these observations, I argue that the concluding message that is communicated by the texts that are used in “Rhythms of the Fall” communicate two profound aspects of settler colonial ideology and its operation within Canadian identity. In the use of Pauline Johnson’s quote above, erasure is evident in the lack of reference to her Indigenous heritage, and in the denial (by omission) of her commitment to Indigenous sovereignty. Her words are appropriated for use in the ceremony to serve the Canadian national identity, just like the words of Chief Dan George were in the previous scene. Additionally, the texts from the media guide rehearse extractive and white supremacist principles that center an unmarked Canadian identity. Overall, the texts that surround this scene establish that the unique identities and values of the individuals and the fiddle cultures they represent is defined by their ability to come together and create something greater, not from their individual identity or contribution as artists or styles. It is the embodiment of a settler colonial value—diversity is employed, that is, appropriated here, for the purpose of defining the settler state.

Music

This scene is built to present and celebrate the various fiddle styles that have developed in different cultures and places across Canada. As in the preceding discussion of the descriptions of the music provided in the text from the media guide, I note here how the music itself is arranged in a way that promotes a hierarchy of cultures, with the “Canadian” as the central and dominant, while the others are forced to the periphery. This pattern, I argue, follows a logic of extraction, which is constitutive of the settler colonial listening positionality, and exemplifies some of the

critiques of multiculturalism as a tool which assumes power rests in the hands of a dominant group.

The main piece of music used in this scene is entitled “Fiddle Nation,” comprising five tunes which were newly composed for the Opening Ceremony by Calvin Vollrath (one of Canada’s most prominent fiddlers) and David Pierce (the music director for Van10) and representing a selection of different regions and fiddle styles.²² As each new fiddler ascends the stage, they play the tune which has been assigned to correspond to the region or style that they are representing. The tunes are entitled: “Le Reel Ooh La La,” “The West Coast Reel,” “Teepee Creeping,” “The Great Eastern Reel,” and “Prairie Hoedown.”²³ After these five solo fiddle pieces are featured separately, the five fiddlers return together to play what the media guide refers to as the “old Canadian standard” *Maple Sugar* as the finale song. *Maple Sugar* was composed in 1956 by Ontario fiddler and composer Ward Allen, and became one of Canada’s most well-known tunes, both locally and internationally.²⁴ It is described as being a reel in the “down east” style.²⁵ The “down east” style was developed by Don Messer (another famous Canadian fiddler), and his colleagues, and is one that is characterized by “waltzes, jigs, polkas and reels, played simply and with excellent dance rhythm.”²⁶ Whitcomb explains that this “down east” style, made popular by Messer (who hosted radio and TV shows and toured across the country around the time of the Centenary in 1967), is “called by some the ‘Canadian style.’”²⁷ In

²² “Calvin Vollrath Fiddle Nation,” Calvin Vollrath, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://calvinvollrath.com/album/5228/fiddle-nation-dd>.

²³ “Calvin Vollrath Fiddle Nation Music Book,” Calvin Vollrath, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://calvinvollrath.com/product/85317>.

²⁴ “Ontario’s Country Music Pioneers,” Country Music Association Ontario, published September 6, 2022, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://cmaontario.ca/ontarios-country-music-pioneers-ward-allen-september-2022/>.

²⁵ “Maple Sugar” *TuneArch.org*, last edited May 20, 2024, accessed June 4, 2024, https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Maple_Sugar.

²⁶ Ed Whitcomb, *Canadian Fiddle Music* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications, 2000), 11.

²⁷ Whitcomb, *Canadian Fiddle Music*, 11.

this arrangement of music, the intention of the texts (discussed above) is made explicit, Canada is a nation made up of many parts (indicated here by styles of fiddle music), which are better together. While this seems to be cheerful and honoring sentiment, I argue that the trajectory that is played out here is one which reflects processes of assimilation (like we saw in the erasure of cultural diversity through the white costumes in the first scene), rather than collaborative intercultural exchange (which may be true in other instances of this music being performed). To recall Robinson's assertion, inclusion may simply be a disguise for "the colonizing impulse of assimilation."²⁸ Rather than ending the scene following the presentation of each of these individual works, the fiddlers relinquish their unique identities and assimilate into the "Canadian" style.

This trend of assimilating diversity into greater Canadian unity continues through the climax of the scene. The five fiddlers are soon succeeded by the "hero tapper" and then another fiddler. This final fiddler, Ashley MacIsaac, plays his work, *Devil in the Kitchen*, before there is an additional reprise of *Maple Sugar* and *Devil in the Kitchen* in which all the solo fiddlers, including MacIsaac, play as the "hero tapper" dances. MacIsaac, a Nova Scotia born fiddler whose style ranges from Celtic to punk rock, said that his piece, "Devil in the Kitchen" resulted out of a drug-induced spontaneous idea during a recording session at a studio.²⁹ "Devil in the

²⁸ Robinson, "Politics," 246. This is not to say however, that the assimilatory impulses I see evident here are implicit in this music. Rather, it is the arrangement of this music in this context in relationship to the visuals and texts which I suggest, provides the assimilative trajectory. In other contexts, this same music may not be evidence of inclusion or assimilation, but of intercultural exchange (I am indebted to Dr Mary Ingraham for bringing this need for nuance here to my attention). In later work, Robinson similarly allows for more nuance, specifically in relationship to encounters between Indigenous musics and art music. See *Hungry Listening*, 122-123ff.

²⁹ Michelle Cooney, "Spill Feature: The Real Devil in the Kitchen – A Conversation with Ashley MacIsaac," *Spill Magazine*, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://spillmagazine.com/spill-feature-the-real-devil-in-the-kitchen-a-conversation-with-ashley-macisaac/>.

Kitchen” was released in 1995 and is written in the Cape Breton Style.³⁰ As the texts above communicated, and this arrangement of music affirms, the unique identities of the fiddlers are eventually superseded by the contributions that they are included to make to the Canadian whole, and their musics are surrendered to oblivion as Contemporary Canada, represented here by MacIsaac’s work, is birthed.

<u>Performer</u>	<u>Song Title</u>	<u>Scene portion</u>	<u>Length</u>
André Brunet	La Reel Ooh La La	1:51:23–1:51:52	29 sec
Daniel Lapp	The West Coast Reel	1:51:52–1:52:22	30 sec
Sierra Noble	Teepee Creeping	1:52:22–1:52:51	29 sec
Samantha Robichaud	The Great Eastern Reel	1:52:51–1:52:23	32 sec
April Verch	Prairie Hoedown	1:52:23–1:53:53	30 sec
All 5 fiddlers	Maple Sugar	1:54:06–1:54:46	40 sec
Hero Tapper	Percussion/Tapping	1:54:46–1:56:33	1 min 49 sec
Ashley MacIsaac	Devil in the Kitchen	1:56:33–1:58:01	1min 30sec
N/A	Applause/percussion	1:58:01–1:58:20	19 sec
All 7 performers	Maple Sugar (Reprise)	1:58:20–1:59:37	1min 17 sec
All 7 performers	Devil in the Kitchen (Reprise)	1:59:37–2:00:52	1min 15 sec

Table 5.1 Performer, Song, and Performance times of “Fiddle Nation”

Not only are the featured solo fiddlers eventually superseded musically by the hero tapper, and by MacIsaac’s character, their relative importance in the scene is also indicated by the amount of time they are featured. As the table included above illustrates, each of the 5 solo fiddlers is only given about 30 seconds in the soloist position before the next artist is featured. This is true until all five performers play “Maple Sugar” together, which lasts 40 seconds. When Ashley MacIsaac’s fiddle solo is presented, he is given a performance slot which lasts three times as long as those who have preceded him (1min 30 sec). Both “Maple Sugar” and “Devil in

³⁰ “MacIsaac, Ashley. – The Devil in the Kitchen,” Citizenfreak.com, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://citizenfreak.com/titles/289297-macisaac-ashley-the-devil-in-the-kitchen-b-w-what-an-idiot-he-is-featuring-jale-picture-sleeve-clear-blue-vinyl>.

the Kitchen” have separate reprises in the latter portion of this scene, while each of the other solo works is left abandoned.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, my interest in these works is not a statement or judgement on their authenticity, but rather what their inclusion and arrangement in this portion of the ceremony is communicating about the overall national identity that is being rehearsed. I am not here to judge authenticity, but simply to investigate how these sources are being used as semiotic resources in the service of national identity curation. What Monique Giroux notes about “Metis (style) fiddling” (a form of naming that she adopts in order to make clear that this style of fiddling is about style, community, but also practiced by other First Nations and Inuit), however, is of interest for this portion of the analysis.³¹ According to Giroux, although this is referred to as Metis (style) fiddling, the style of fiddling is also practiced outside of Metis culture. She also warns that a quest for nailing down a particular authentic style can result in “a homogeneous and essentialist view of Metis people.”³² Some qualities common to this style are clogging, cross-tuning, and asymmetrical phrasing.³³ However, what Giroux’s research indicates is that within Metis culture, the actual style is considered of less importance than the community which is formed and gathered around the music.³⁴ In this scene though, we see the opposite taking place. Like each of the other fiddling styles demonstrated by the other 4 solo fiddlers, the representation

³¹ Following Brenda Macdougall, Giroux omits the acute accent from “Metis” in her article as a means of de-emphasizing the French aspect of the heritage. I do so for the remainder of this paragraph. Monique Giroux, “Metis (Style) Fiddling: From Historical Roots to Contemporary Practice” in *Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, ed Sherry Johnson, Judith Klassen, Anna Hoefnagels, (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019), 234n4. Brenda Macdougall, *One of the Family: Metis Culture in Nineteenth-Century Northwestern Saskatchewan*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010).

³² Giroux, “Metis (Style) Fiddling,” 215.

³³ Giroux, “Metis (Style) Fiddling,” 209, 234.

³⁴ Giroux, “Metis (Style) Fiddling,” 234; For a discussion on authenticity of Indigenous music, see Michael Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) and Tara Browner, “Transposing Cultures: The Appropriation of Native North American Musics, 1890-1990” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1995).

of Metis fiddling featured here is extracted from a communal context, and presented for the benefit of claiming that Canada is “diverse.”

Eurocentric Musical Diversity

A glaringly obvious concern, which I have not yet addressed in this chapter, is that the musical style which was chosen to present Canada’s musical and cultural diversity is one that originates from a predominantly white, European heritage. Although it is now practiced by various Indigenous groups including Mi’kmaq and Métis peoples, the origins of this art form are settler colonial. Fiddling in Canada originates from Europe and, as the other artistic elements of this scene highlight, specifically the Celtic heritage from England, Scotland, Ireland, the seat of empire. Although 5 different styles are chosen here to represent “diversity,” this feels like a blatant restatement of the white-washing that occurred in the first scene, where diversity is mentioned, but then disguised or overturned by whiteness (there, literally in the costume choices, here figuratively in the choice of genre). In contrast to this white-washed attempt at diversity, a quick glance at a recently published work on music and dance practices in Canada demonstrates a much truer and more global picture of the range of “diverse” musical and dance styles which are practiced in Canada. Fiddling is featured in several of the chapters, but other chapters also highlight diverse musical and performance practices as disparate as Kathak Dance (which originates in India), “Chinese Canadian Lion Dance,” and hip-hop artists whose heritages include Caribbean and African diasporic communities.³⁵ The choice to center fiddle music as

³⁵ Megan Forsyth, “Improvising on the Margins: Tradition and Musical Agency in les Îles-de-la-Madeleine;” Ian Hayes, “‘Holy jeez, I can hear *everything*’: Liveness in Cape Breton Fiddle Recordings;” Margaret E Walker, “Kathak in Canada: Classical and Contemporary;” Colin P. McGuire, “War Drums in Chinatown: Chinese Canadian Lion Dance Percussion as Martial Art;” Jesse Stewart and Niel Scobie, “Fantastic Voyage: The Diasporic Roots and Routes of Early Toronto Hip Hop,” in *Contemporary Musical Contemporary Musical Expressions in Canada*, ed Sherry Johnson, Judith Klassen, Anna Hoefnagels, (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019).

representative of Canadian diversity demonstrates the priorities of the organizers in centering a European cultural heritage at the expense of the “multicultural others” they aim to include.

Just as we saw communicated in the text, I argue that the message that is communicated by the arrangement of the music here is that eventually, the unique value of the different musics is superseded by what comes to stand in as the Canadian national standard. If this is the result when the music is simply variations of a European art form, I see this as a miniature scale of the larger process of artistic choice at the Olympics as a whole. Enacted on a micro level here is the kind of contradictory inclusionary yet assimilative processes that have been evident in the ceremony up to this point. Diversity is acknowledged, but overlooked as what is truly “Canadian” (that is, those of Anglophone heritage) is prioritized. The arrangement of the music thus communicates a particular set of hierarchical values which privileges Eurocentric musical heritage.

Visuals

There are some striking visual elements included in “Rhythms of the Fall,” which conjure up ideas of place, season, and heritage, and which also communicate hierarchies and exclusions. My main focus of analysis in this section is on the costuming choices and the visual arrangement (choreography) of the characters on stage and in relationship to one another, before turning to those details, however, I briefly discuss some of the other visual motifs present in this scene.

The most prevalent visual element featured in this scene, which I will not address in the detailed analysis is the maple leaf. Its presence here serves as a reference both to Canada’s flag, to the prominence of maple syrup production and consumption, and of course, “the Fall” which is the setting for this scene. The maple leaves are featured as the decoration for the main elevated stage (see, for instance, 1:51:45), and then additionally later as baseboards for the dancers to tap on the main floor. At various points in the scene, thousands of small maple leaves also fall from

the ceiling of the arena (1:50:41–1:50:45, 1:51:57–1:52:03). Although the Maple Leaf was a prominent symbol in Canadian history, including its presence on the coats of arms of Canada, Quebec and Ontario, its adoption as the national flag, was controversial and far from unanimous and uniting in process and result.³⁶

Against this backdrop of vibrant yellow, orange, but certainly mostly red maple leaves, the main visual action takes place. In this section which focusses on the visual mode, I am particularly interested in how the various solo performers are positioned in relationship to one another and what this communicates about how difference is managed, mined, and manipulated for its service to the Canadian national identity. Secondly, I observe that this same tendency—managing difference for the sake of curating an overarching national culture—is communicated through the costuming choices that have been made. There are unique costumes for each of the featured performers: the 5 solo fiddlers, the hero tapper, and the “Canadian fiddler,” and though there are some cohesive elements in texture and style through the use of leather and plaid, the hero tapper’s costume stands out as significantly different. While the frequent use of plaid and tartan makes clear reference to the Scottish and Celtic heritage evoked in this scene, it is the unique combination of the hero tapper’s costume that communicates revelatory assertions about the Canadian identity.

Choreography/Stage Positioning

The first portion of the visual analysis will investigate the stage positioning, and some simple aspects of the choreography that is employed here. This will not be a detailed choreographic analysis, nor an analysis of the tap dancing, since what I am most interested in in this section is how the characters are positioned on stage and in relationship to the other

³⁶ Donald Wright, “Flag,” in *Symbols of Canada*, eds. Michael Dawson, Catherine Gidney, and Donald Wright, (Between the Lines, Toronto, 2018), 90, 92.

performers, and what these artistic arrangements reveal about the underlying ideologies that inform them. As in previous chapters, I do not address the identity of the individuals, but merely the identity of the characters that they have been assigned to play, except where they are representing themselves. As this scene progresses, there is a noteworthy evolution of the positions of the 5 fiddlers, the ‘hero tapper’ and the ‘Canadian fiddler’ in relationship to one another through the scene. Drawing from the work of David Machin and Andrea Mayr on the role of critical discourse analysis in understanding visual elements of communication, I argue that the position of these characters reinforces a settler colonial hierarchy of cultures that centers the “unmarked Canadian” (to borrow Mackey’s phrase). Before moving on to that analysis, I briefly summarise the trajectory of the fiddler positions.

In the beginning part of this scene, each individual fiddler ascends the central part of the stage, as they play their assigned excerpt, showing off their fiddle skills (1:51:22–1:53:53). The five fiddlers are each treated equally in this portion—each given a moment in the spotlight, each eventually “one-upped” by the following performer. Finally, the hero tapper and the Canadian fiddler take their places on top of the stand. As the hero tapper ascends the stage, the raised portion subtly increases in height (see 1:54:46ff), and later, as the Canadian Fiddler (Ashley MacIsaac) is featured, the stage is again made taller (see 1:56:33ff). The increased height of the stage here reflects the increased importance that is given to the hero tapper and then Canadian fiddler, just like their increased solo performance times.

During the musical reprise, all seven of the performers are shown at the far end of the stadium floor, still dancing. However, a significant shift has taken place in the group dynamics represented by their positions in relationship to one another. Whereas during the fiddle solos, each performer was given individual time at the top of the raised stage, now the 5 original

fiddlers are assigned to the periphery, while the hero tapper and the Canadian fiddler are centered in front of them (see especially, 2:00:44). Additionally, as the climax of the scene approaches, the 5 fiddlers stop playing and repeatedly swing their bows back over their shoulders and then forward again as they point towards the hero tapper and Canadian fiddler, who are still joyously tapping and fiddling, respectively (2:00:09–2:00:57). The scene concludes with the five solo fiddlers receding into the background, while the “hero tapper” and “Canadian” fiddler initiate with their final movements the transition that begins the following scene.

Although diversity has been included and centered for the middle portions of this scene, it is in the evolution of the character positions in relationship to one another which, I argue, reveals the continued operation of settler colonial power of managing diversity. In their examples of visual analysis, Machin and Mayr explain that the positioning of actors in the background or foreground can communicate their respective level of importance and facilitate the structuring of hierarchies. Although their analyses speak to pictures and not moving images, the observations they make are equally relevant for the present subject. They write, “foregrounding creates importance. Elements that are further back may become subordinate.”³⁷ I argue that this is what we see communicated in the visual mode of this scene. As the screen capture (Fig 5.2) included above as indicates, the 5 fiddlers who are representing specific cultural or regional styles of fiddling are, by the climax of the scene, positioned behind the “hero tapper” and the “Canadian” fiddler. The “hero tapper” and “Canadian” fiddler are foregrounded, increasing their importance, and marking as subordinate the fiddlers who are positioned behind them. Additionally, Machin and Mayr suggest that “distance signifies social relations.”³⁸ The choreographers have created a

³⁷ David Machin and Andrea Mayr, *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis: A Multimodal Approach* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 56.

³⁸ Machin and Mayr, *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 97.

distance between the two foregrounded identities, and the backgrounded, now minoritized, others. Although initially the 5 fiddlers were highlighted individually, they are now presented as a group that is subordinate to the two soloists who are centered and placed in the foreground. As Machin and Mayr further explain the significance of depicting people as a group can be a tool towards homogeneity.³⁹ In the image of the 5 fiddlers as one group now positioned behind the two featured soloists, the 5 original soloists lose their unique identities as individuals are presented as a more homogeneous group. As we have seen in both the texts and musical arrangement discussed earlier in this chapter, and in the analyses from previous chapters, the tendency towards assimilation within constructions of Canadian national identity is still extremely potent.

I argue that the choreography that comes to its conclusion here reveals that the 5 individual fiddlers are eventually superseded by one “Canadian” fiddler, and the “hero” tapper. All the diversity that has been celebrated is now pushed to the background in order to center the Canadian (noticeably white male) identity. Just like we saw communicated in the text and the music, the message that is communicated by the arrangement of this choreography is that the unique and separate identities are only of value as they are contributing to the greater whole. Here we see enacted in front of us on the stage Himani Bannerji’s critique of multiculturalism. Bannerji writes, “multiculturalism is itself a vehicle for racialization. It establishes anglo-Canadian culture as the ethnic core culture, while ‘tolerating’ and hierarchically arranging others around it as ‘multiculture.’”⁴⁰ In “Rhythms of the Fall,” the show designers have created a core Canadian identity embodied by the noticeably white male hero tapper and “Canadian” fiddler,

³⁹ Machin and Mayr, *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis*, 100-101.

⁴⁰Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 2000), 78.

while all the others, as Bannerji would put it, are “hierarchically arrange[d]... around it.”

Bannerji’s comments are not about a physical or artistic representation, she is writing of a political construct. However, my application of those words to this scene provides a salient and direct description of how the images being portrayed here communicate underlying ideologies.

This positional arrangement of the five “diverse” fiddlers behind the two performers who are identified respectively as the “hero” and as the “Canadian” communicates visually what Mackey has expressed as a problematic aspect of Canadian identity constructions. That is, inclusions of diversity do not contribute to justice or freedom for marginalized groups but can instead further reinscribe power in the hands of the dominant. In ceasing to play, being assigned to a physical background position, and swinging their bows back and forward to point attention toward the “hero” and the “Canadian” the 5 fiddlers are forced to relinquish their own identities for the sake of contributing to that which is literally performed as central.

Costuming

The second visual element which contributes to my reading of this scene is the costuming of the five fiddlers in contrast to that of the “hero tapper.” As mentioned earlier, after the 5 fiddlers have played, Brock Jellison, referred to within the program as the “hero tapper” takes to the stage for a solo dance performance. In addition to being distinguished by his title, “hero tapper,” his costume differs from those of his counterparts in some intriguing ways. I argue that this costume design reflects some of the qualities of multiculturalism that are advocated for in this part of the ceremony, and in constructions of Canada’s national identity. Further, the extractive logic of settler colonialism working through narratives of multiculturalism is evident in how the “hero tapper’s” costume is pieced together. To make this connection clear, we must first examine the costumes of the other 5 fiddlers who precede the “hero tapper’s” performance.

Each of the performers is wearing a costume which features one primary color scheme or pattern.⁴¹ André Brunet, representing Quebecois fiddling, and Daniel Lapp, representing West Coast fiddling, wear outfits primarily featuring buffalo or lumberjack plaid, with Brunet in blue (possibly a reflection of the blue design of the Quebecois flag) and Lapp in red. This plaid (most often seen throughout Canada in blue or red) has come to be stereotypical in Canadian culture, both in popular culture and in the fashion industry.⁴² Buffalo Plaid was also one of the featured icons of Canadian culture which The Hudson's Bay Company, responsible for outfitting the Vancouver 2010 athletes, chose to incorporate in their designs.⁴³ Sierra Noble, who is representing Metis fiddling here, wears a red dress with a multicolored sash around the waist. This sash, or belt, is also known as "L'Assomption sash or Ceinture Flechee," and "became the most recognizable part of the Metis dress and a symbol of Metis people."⁴⁴ It was used as both an accessory and a tool. As opposed to earlier parts of the ceremony where Indigenous identity and First Nations participation was highlighted and centered, in this scene, Indigenous identity (represented by the Metis style fiddling) is reduced to be simply another one of the multiculturalities that makes up Canada's national identity. The practice made visible here is a reflection of what Christine O'Bonsawin views as a more general problem of multiculturalism visible in Canada and in the Vancouver 2010 Olympic process as a whole. She writes, "bid organizers fomented a

⁴¹ It is too much to include 5 images here, but timestamps for where each of the costumes are seen most prominently are: 1:51:36, 1:51:54, 1:52:27, 1:53:13, 1:53:51.

⁴² Taylor Brydges and Brian J. Hracs, "Consuming Canada: How Fashion Firms Leverage the Landscape to Create and Communicate Brand Identities, Distinction and Values," *Geoforum* 90 (March 1, 2018). Jennifer Andrews, quoted in "'Refashioning' Canadian Identity Eh," in *Canadian NewsWire*. June 4, 2010. See also, the plaid cover of the book "Symbols of Canada", which also contains an ad for a poutine chain that includes the phrase #plaidnation, 6.

⁴³ Elisa Kosonen, "Wear The Bay Dresses Us for the Vancouver Games," ed. Mishal Cazmi, Luisa Rino, and Janna Zittler, *Planet Flare* 32, no. 2 (February 2010).

⁴⁴ "Symbols of Métis Culture," Alberta Métis, Métis Nation of Alberta, accessed June 4, 2024, <https://albertametis.com/culture/symbols-of-culture/>, <https://albertametis.com/app/uploads/2021/05/Culture-Cards-Metis-Sash.png>

wider confusion about indigenous peoples as an ethnic minority within Canada's multicultural milieu."⁴⁵ Samantha Robichaud, representing the "down east" fiddling style, wears a tartan skirt or kilt that is predominantly red and green, while April Verch wears bright yellow boots to accompany her yellow skirt. The yellow skirt is not plaid or tartan like many of the other fabrics used here, but the bright yellow color is reminiscent of the Prairie fields of wheat and canola that are typical of the Prairie region she represents. What is overarchingly true of each of these costumes is that they are one primary material, there is no mixing, nor are they pieced together from various other elements.

The costume of the "hero tapper" is markedly different from these. The kilt he wears appears to be pieced together from scraps of fabric, each of a different color, which hearken back to the costumes of the previous performers. Wrapped around his body as part of the kilt he wears are pieces of a blue lumberjack or buffalo plaid, a red tartan, a pale-yellow tartan, and one piece of fabric with brown/red stripes (see, for instance, 1:54:52–1:55:07, and 1:55:18). Unlike each of the previous performers who had a unified, one-pattern scheme costume, this costume is pieced together from multicolored samples of other fabrics. Although these are not exact samples of the fabrics that were used in the other costumes, the message that is being demonstrated in this construction is clear. The identity being constructed for the hero tapper, echoes the narrative of Canada as a multicultural mosaic. The identity that is put on to this character via this "kilt" is appropriated from the identities of the other performers, cultures, or styles that have preceded him in the scene.

There is one other main difference between this character, and the previous ones. The "hero tapper" appears without a shirt and only wearing a vest, leaving his arms and chest bare.

⁴⁵ Christine M. O'Bonsawin, "'No Olympics on Stolen Native Land': Contesting Olympic Narratives and Asserting Indigenous Rights within the Discourse of the 2010 Vancouver Games," *Sport in Society* 13, no. 1 (2010), 148.

They are not entirely bare, though, since they are covered in tattoos. The tattoos on his torso and on his upper arms are Celtic knot patterns, similar to those that were seen in the earlier portion of this scene when they were projected on the floor (1:49:43–1:49:46). These tattoos are most clearly seen from this screen capture at 1:55:18. The lower parts of his arms seem to have a more organic pattern, which may be a reference to Indigenous art styles of BC (seen earlier in the salmon and whale art in transitional material after scene 1), but the predominant feature is the Celtic knots on his chest and upper arms.⁴⁶ I read this costume design as an analogy of the settler colonial condition of Canada—what is true of this character is true of Canada. Though we attempt to clothe ourselves with diversity and tolerance, embracing and welcoming many multicultural others, the truth of our identity, (that is, a predominantly European settler colonial heritage) like the markings tattooed on this character’s body, are not so easily changed.⁴⁷

In this scene, through both the costuming choices that have been made and through the choreographic choices, multicultural diversity is treated as a resource to be mined, extracted, and appropriated for the benefit of the settler culture. In combination with the stage positioning discussed earlier in this section on the visual mode, these choices reflect an underlying ideology that centers whiteness and the settler heritage.

Multimodal Results and Discussion of Combined Analysis

Unlike the scenes that I have analyzed in previous chapters, I do not interpret any obvious disjunctures between the music, the visuals, and the texts in “Rhythms of the Fall.” The different semiotic modes, and the choices that have been made within each one, serve to amplify and illustrate one another, creating a cohesive narrative. In each mode, the narrative that is

⁴⁶ I am indebted to Dr Jada Watson for the first part of this observation.

⁴⁷ Andre Brunet has Fleur-de-lis tattooed over his elbows. Daniel Lapp has arrows and concentric circles. Sierra Noble has some faint tattoo lines, but the last two performers don’t have any.

communicated is one in which difference is at first featured, before being joined together for the sake of creating a more superior (and essentially “Canadian”) whole. In the texts, this was demonstrated in the media guide by the description of the scene which stated, “a symphony made up of many parts that makes a richer composition together than apart.”⁴⁸ Visually, this concept was communicated both through the costuming choices and the choreography. While the costumes of the 5 initial soloists were each unique, the kilt on the “hero tapper” appeared to be pieced together from different samples of fabric to illustrate Canada’s mosaic narrative. Similarly, through the arrangement of the performers on stage, one true Canadian identity was centered, while the others were forced to the periphery. In the choices and arrangement of music, the “diverse” options were featured but then superseded by the “Canadian standard.” These semiotic resources all illustrated and amplified one overarching message which, I argue, operates within a settler colonial logic. That is, the message that is being amplified is not one of merely valuing diversity for its own sake, but that diversity is a resource that is extracted for the benefit of solidifying the national identity. As has been discussed throughout this dissertation, the mindset of extraction is characteristic of the settler colonial ideology that is still at work in expressions of Canadian identity. Himani Bannerji notes that discourses of diversity operate in the service of solidifying a central norm. Alongside what she refers to as official or “top down” multiculturalism, diversity discourse “is a coping mechanism for dealing with an actually conflicting heterogeneity, seeking to incorporate it into an ideological binary which is predicated upon the existence of a homogeneous national, that is, a Canadian cultural self with its multiple and different others.”⁴⁹ The artistic choices in each mode in this scene reinforce this idea of a

⁴⁸ Media Guide, 57.

⁴⁹ Himani Bannerji, “The Paradox of Diversity: The Construction of a Multicultural Canada and ‘Women of Color,’” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 23, no. 5 (2000), 548

homogeneous Canadian self which is bolstered by its difference from, and eventual superiority over these “multiple and different others.”

Later in her article, Bannerji also quotes from Angela Davis, whose work makes explicit the consumptive nature of multiculturalism, although Davis does not connect this to settler colonial policy and practice. Davis writes, “Multiculturalism has acquired a quality akin to spectacle. The metaphor that has displaced the melting pot is the salad. A salad consists of many ingredients, is colorful and beautiful, and it is to be consumed by someone. Who consumes multiculturalism is a question begging to be asked.”⁵⁰ The answer for the present context, based on the settler colonial logics and the artistic spectacle under consideration in this dissertation, is that multiculturalism is consumed by settlers and the settler state. This ties back to Robinson’s concept of the settler listening positionality as essentially being one which is “hungry,” which comes from the settler greed for gold, land, and Indigenous art and culture.⁵¹ As the work of these scholars explains, and as I argue we see presented in this scene, multiculturalism serves to satisfy colonial hunger, validate the settler state, and distract attention from injustice. The arrangement of music and other artistic elements in this scene operates from a hungry settler positionality, which seeks to satiate its own need for identity and validity by extracting the cultural products and identities of those it construes as its “multicultural others.”

Conclusions of Chapter Five

The artistic choices made in “Rhythms of the Fall” are evidence of the settler colonial tendencies of extraction, which serve as erasure or assimilation of difference. The inclusion of

⁵⁰ Angela Y Davis, “Gender, class and multiculturalism: Rethinking “race” politics,” in *Mapping multiculturalism* ed. Avery Gordon & Christopher Newfield, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 45. Cited in Bannerji, “The Paradox of Diversity,” 537.

⁵¹ Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 49.

multiculturalism and diversity is an example of the “politics of recognition,” a technique, which Coulthard points out, attempts to participate in decolonization, but really, only further inscribes settler colonial power. As many scholars critical of multiculturalism note, multiculturalism tends to further isolate and oppress those it purports to include. This is because, as Eva Mackey explains, “despite the proliferation of cultural difference, the power to define, limit and tolerate differences still lies in the hands of the dominant group.”⁵² Multiculturalism thus operates as a tool of the politics of recognition, providing a change in content, while leaving structural injustices in place. In the Olympics specifically, Jennifer Adese affirms that “multicultural discourse...conceals the basis of state-Olympic-Indigenous relationships” and “is mobilized in branding national identities in the name of an increasingly corporatized national interest.”⁵³

In this scene, settler identity is centered while Indigenous presence is included but pushed to the background as simply another one of Canada’s multicultures. Diversity is treated as a resource to be extracted for the purpose of the well-being and prosperity of the over-arching culture. The texts, musical arrangement, and costuming and staging choices communicate a cohesive message that the diversity (although in this case, it is primarily different European cultures being represented) that is included exists as secondary to the central “Canadian” culture. The multicultures are valued, not for their own sake, but for the contribution that they make to defining the Canadian identity. Jackie Hogan’s analysis of the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 games observes similarly that “Aboriginal Australians and performers representing non-White migrants to Australia were present in impressive numbers. However, qualitatively, these

⁵² Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*, Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication (New York: Routledge, 1999), 83.

⁵³ Jennifer Adese, “Colluding with the Enemy? Nationalism and Depictions of ‘Aboriginality’ in Canadian Olympic Moments,” *American Indian Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2012), 497.

groups were essentialized and rendered peripheral to the narrative of nation.”⁵⁴ The settler colonial origins and ideologies of both these nations (Canada and Australia) are expressed in how diversity is managed.

Unlike any of the scenes of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony which precede this one, “Rhythms of the Fall” foregrounds music. The diversity and unity expressed through the music is held up as a metaphor for the identity of the country. However, national identity is curated through a primarily settler form of artistic practice, although one which has also been adopted and developed by Indigenous groups as well. Techniques of erasure and appropriation are evident in the use of poetry by Pauline Johnson, and in the presence of Indigenous identity as “simply another one of Canada’s multicultures.” Artistically, this scene enacts the “politics of recognition,” maintaining a settler assumption that recognition is something which remains in the dominant culture’s power to grant.

This section of the ceremony illustrates the disjuncture at the heart of Canadian national identity constructions: like the hero tapper we see in this scene, his clothes may be patched together from the different cultures represented, but tattooed on his body are the marks of the old country. So also, just as Canada is clothed with tolerance, does settler colonialism mark our continued existence. As these examples demonstrate, and as Mignolo’s framing of the decolonial project makes clear, a decolonized, just, anti-racist future requires changing not just the content of the representations, but the very terms on which those representations occur.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Hogan, “Staging the Nation,” 115.

⁵⁵ Walter Mignolo, *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 478.

Chapter Six – Conclusion

You can't diversity, equity & inclusion your way
out of coloniality and settler colonialism.

Jairo I Fúnez-Flores¹

We're talking about how human beings are
more important than nationalism,
more important than a flag.

Joan Baez²

A group of graduate students sit in a classroom, studying the music at internationally significant sporting events. Canada is not mentioned. The 1936 Berlin Olympics take up much of the lesson. What do we learn? Music is not neutral. It can be used in the service of racism, injustice, and abuse. The Olympics are a spectacle of nationalist propaganda, and when nationalism is left unchecked (especially nationalism that is founded on exclusionary principles), it can have dangerous and deadly ramifications, as our ancestors experienced in the years after 1936, and as we read in global news headlines, day after day. A grad student sets out to understand how Canada uses music in the service of national identity construction at the Olympics, learns about the settler colonial history of the nation, and, after many years of careful listening, reading, and writing, a dissertation is born.

The events in Vancouver 2010 may feel far removed from both our present, and from the terrors of Nazi Germany, but if we choose to become critical of our own listening positionalities, and thereby truly listen to our neighbors, we learn that despite the stories that the government would have us believe (Canada is a vast, peaceful, multicultural nation after all), our country is

¹ Jairo I Fúnez-Flores (@Jairo_I_Funez), "You can't diversity, equity & inclusion your way out of coloniality and settler colonialism," X post (formerly Twitter), July 11, 2022, 9:59a.m., https://twitter.com/Jairo_I_Funez/status/1546494513056718848.

² Joan Baez, "Joan Baez Is Still Doing Beautiful, Cool Stuff," interview by Amanda Petrusich, *The New Yorker*, May 14, 2023, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-interview/joan-baez-is-still-doing-beautiful-cool-stuff>.

not, in fact, innocent of the evils of genocide. These words may feel dark, distant, and accusatory, but it is better to face these uncomfortable truths than to continue walking blindly, without care or concern for how our privilege has been built from the wrested lands and valuables of the people who have cared for this land since time immemorial, and who continue to fight for the right to live in it with the same freedom, health, and privilege as white settlers do every day. A dissertation about music cannot make substantial political or cultural change, but my hope is that it can start helping people to think differently, and that in our thinking differently, we will eventually act differently.

Summary

As I have argued throughout this dissertation, despite the efforts of the organizers to produce a show that presents Canada in the best light, the resulting spectacle of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony was governed by an underlying logic of settler colonialism. Drawing from Dylan Robinson's critical appraisals of the settler listening positionality and of music practices in Canada, I have particularly noted how multicultural and landscape-based tropes, often employed in the service of Canadian nationalism, are indeed "not benign choices" but directly further the goals of settler colonialism.³ My three case studies—excerpts from the first three scenes of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony demonstrate this concern. In addition to Robinson's instruction which inspired the overarching intent of this dissertation, my research is informed by an anti-colonial approach which attends to two particular characteristics of settler colonialism—erasure and extraction. I have highlighted numerous techniques of erasure and extraction that were made in the artistic content (words-music-visuals) of the three scenes.

³ Dylan Robinson, *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 12.

Each different case study (and thus, each of the three analytic chapters) also had its own unique additional interpretive context to aid in the analysis. In Chapter Three, this was the concept of hauntology, which, though originating with Derrida, has become a popular frame of reference for understanding the presence or results of oppression in contemporary society, as well as interpreting the presence of Indigenous peoples and places in settler environments. On the other hand, Cameron warns that an overemphasis on “confining the Indigenous to the ghostly” can function in the service of settler colonialism.⁴ Cameron’s observations are useful for the interpretations in Chapter Three as I examine the ways in which Indigenous and other minoritized peoples are, to use Baloy’s term, “spectralized” or confined to a place of haunting through costuming and soundscape choices. The second case study (“Sacred Grove,” in Chapter Four) serves as an example of the settler colonial concept which Paul Litt defines as the “displaced culture dilemma,” in that the settler culture struggles to assert its own identity as distinct from but in inheritance of the imperial culture, and in pursuit of eliminating the Indigenous culture while also indebted to it for validity.⁵ In this scene, such displacement is evident through the appropriation of Indigenous creativity and culture (for instance, the totem poles and Chief Dan George’s poetry), and through a reliance on classical music and ballet as techniques which linked the culture back to its imperial roots. In the final analytic chapter (Chapter Five), I drew on critiques of multiculturalism, most notably Eva Mackey’s, in order to demonstrate how the rehearsal of multicultural rhetoric within artistic spectacle serves to reinscribe the power of the dominant (in this case, settler Canadians) while forcing “others” to

⁴ Emilie Cameron, “Indigenous Spectrality and the Politics of Postcolonial Ghost Stories: Cultural Geographies,” *Cultural Geographies* 15, no. 3 (July 2008), 390.

⁵ Paul Litt, “Settler Colonial Theory and Canadian Cultural Nationalism,” *Settler Colonial Studies*, May 30, 2023, 2.

the periphery. I note how the extractive principles of settler colonialism inform the costuming, musical, and choreographic choices made for this scene.

Overall, the combined analyses of the case studies presented in these chapters demonstrates the pervasiveness of settler colonial ideologies in constructions of Canadian nationalism. Just as Robinson's alert expresses, multicultural and landscape-based tropes are used in ways that disguise, but also center, settler colonial perspectives. The media guide synopsis of the cultural portion is explicit in its emphasis on both multicultural and landscape-based diversity in pursuit of defining the "greatness" of the nation:

At this point in the ceremony, we shift gears to explore and celebrate Canada's amazing and diverse geography and its equally amazing and diverse people. Landscape of a Dream is the unifying idea behind tonight's cultural display. Throughout these six segments, we see how Canada's spectacular landscape has inspired Canadians to dream – creating distinct cultures, music and art within one great nation.⁶

At the surface level, this goal sounds admirable, progressive, and honoring to diversity, both of people and of landscape. However, as the combined warnings of Coulthard and Robinson express, recognition and inclusion (marked here by reference to a celebration of diversity) are, on their own, incapable of producing substantive (that is, structural) change for Indigenous peoples and minoritized neighbors. In Mignolo's words, then, we can see these references to diversity, and the inclusionary art that was produced in the ceremony, as demonstrating changes in content without changes to terms. This is because, as Coulthard, Robinson, and Mackey express, such changes in content are managed and defined by the dominant (in this context, the settler colonizers), and thus assumes and reinscribes the engagement based on their terms. This rhetoric, and its resulting artistic representation in spectacles reflects the trajectory of nationalism to universality and superiority that I observed in the words of the nationalist composers in the first

⁶ Media Guide, 47.

chapter of this dissertation. Further studies of musical nationalisms should be alert to these tendencies as part of continued efforts to decenter whiteness and participate in decolonization.

Overall, my conclusions align with what others have observed about Indigenous presence and inclusion at Olympic events. As Christine O’Bonsawin writes, “The inclusion of colonial narratives has tacitly been enshrined within the Olympic formula, and indigenous peoples have long served the performance needs of nations whose histories rest in imperial conquest.”⁷ O’Bonsawin’s critiques highlight the fact that the representation or presence of Indigenous peoples within Olympic spectacles is not demonstrative of decolonial or reconciliatory processes. She continues, “Throughout Olympic history, most notably within the last quarter of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century, there have been numerous incidences to support claims that indigenous peoples have been proactively, if not productively, incorporated into the cultural programs of Olympic modules in support of colonial narratives.”⁸ Like my case studies in this dissertation have shown, the presence of Indigenous people, or reference to their cultures, does not necessarily imply decolonization, reconciliation, or Indigenous sovereignty, and is frequently aligned with settler colonial ideologies. Mark Devitt’s conclusion of the Vancouver 2010 games is the same. He writes, “there is a gap between Olympic rhetoric and Aboriginal reality. The IOC oppresses and appropriates Aboriginal culture under the guise of unity.”⁹ As I have demonstrated in my analyses in the preceding chapters, the artistic choices made in the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony affirm O’Bonsawin’s concern, and Devitt’s assertion. In each scene, though there was reference to, or at some level, the

⁷ Christine M. O’Bonsawin, “‘No Olympics on Stolen Native Land’: Contesting Olympic Narratives and Asserting Indigenous Rights within the Discourse of the 2010 Vancouver Games,” *Sport in Society* 13, no. 1 (2010),” 152.

⁸ O’Bonsawin, “No Olympics,” 152.

⁹ Mark Devitt, “The Myth of Olympic Unity: The Dilemma of Diversity, Olympic Oppression, and the Politics of Difference” (Master’s thesis, University of Toronto, 2010), 139.

participation of Indigenous peoples, these were managed in such a way that consistently served settler colonial goals. As my framework developed in Chapter Two demonstrates, aligning Coulthard's critique of the politics of recognition, and Robinson's refusal of inclusionary music with Mignolo's assertions that decoloniality does not take place unless it addresses both content and terms, this Olympic ceremony is evident of some changes to content, but did not allow for meaningful re-negotiation of the terms of engagement. Continued attention to Indigenous refusals and resurgence, built from a positionality of love and humility rather than the self-seeking extractive goals of settler colonialism, will, as I have proposed in Chapter Two, provide a foundation from which changing terms could be developed.

Other Sections of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony

Having only discussed in depth approximately 50% of the cultural portion of the Opening Ceremony, I offer here a brief summary of the other half of the cultural portion, in order to demonstrate the consistency of the presence of settler colonial practice and ideologies there. The other three scenes in the cultural portion ("Landscape of a Dream"), entitled "Who Has Seen the Wind," "Peaks of Endeavour," and "We are More," respectively, are not as content-rich as the three that I have discussed here. However, they continue with much the same trend that I have observed in the case studies that form the basis of this dissertation. Overall, there is a lack of Indigenous representation and participation, the landscape is portrayed as being empty and of service to the settlers who engage with it, and cultural diversity is referenced for the purpose of defining and asserting the superiority of the whole.

The narrative of the cultural portion as a whole can be seen not just as a journey of progress through place covering a wide range of the landscape, but can also be seen as a journey through time. Before discussing the final three scenes, I briefly summarise the first three again

here. The first scene, “Hymn to the North,” establishes a mythologized vision of the North, and of first contact in which Indigenous peoples and other minoritized groups are spectralized and relegated to a sanitized past. The following scene, “Sacred Grove” presents an interaction between settlers and the landscape. In “Sacred Grove,” settler characters are portrayed as engaging with the landscape as if for the first time, experiencing awe, and eventually, transcendence, through the beauty and grandeur they see and engage with. As the narrative progresses through both time and place, the third scene, “Rhythms of the Fall,” celebrates more contemporary Canadian culture through the fiddling traditions which have spread across the country. Although the scene points to cultural diversity by including various fiddle styles, these styles, and the individuals who represent them are eventually superseded by a “hero tapper” and “Canadian fiddler” who take precedence as the others are choreographed into the background.

The fourth scene, “Who has Seen the Wind,” (2:01:01–2:07:07) features a lone child soaring (via wire) over projections of rippling fields of wheat on the stadium floor, accompanied by Joni Mitchell’s song “Both Sides Now.” Like the first scene, this scene emphasizes emptiness as it presents the prairies. Based on how Canada’s prairies are represented here, audiences could be excused for thinking that there’s nothing but empty fields between Toronto in the East, and Vancouver in the West. Amy Fung, writing about colonialism in Canada more generally, notes that there is often an emphasis on “the spaciousness of the prairies, which in itself is a settler gaze that relies on the work of erasing Indigenous people, culture, and knowledge from their own territories.”¹⁰

The fifth scene, “Peaks of Endeavour,” (2:07:07–2:15:35) returns audiences to the present—both temporally and spatially, as it pictures winter sports occurring in the Rocky

¹⁰ Amy Fung, “Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 53, no. 2 (2021), 117.

Mountains. A quote from George Vancouver again promotes the vastness of the landscape, while acrobats suspended via wire in bright red costumes travel over the mountains (the banners used in previous scenes). The cultural portion closes with a performance by Shane Koyczan of his work, “We are More” (2:15:36–2:18:48) which emphasizes Canada as a polite nation, of “cultures strung together, then woven into a tapestry...the true North, strong and free.” The musical underscore during his recitation is a languishingly slow orchestral rendition of “O Canada.” Koyczan, who is of Indigenous heritage, later stated that he regrets his participation in the event and called out Canada’s historic and present injustices.¹¹ Koyczan, after refusing to participate in 10 year anniversary celebrations for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, took to Facebook, and wrote a long statement outlining parts of his own story and his refusal to participate in the anniversary, stating “I can’t bring myself to proclaim Canada’s greatness while injustices like the ones endured by the Wet’suwet’en Nation continue, or while Attiwapiskat swallows poisoned water, or while indigenous children are arrested for opening bank accounts.”¹² His words directly oppose the problem of the distance between surface level representations of Canada and the structural reality that sustains oppression.

Even this cursory glance at the final three scenes reveals that the basic trends of erasure, extraction, and possession continue, and that both multiculturalism and landscape-based tropes are employed for the purpose of reinforcing the supremacy of the settler state. Like Nathan Kalman-Lamb asserts, in the cultural portion of the ceremony, an “early emphasis on Indigeneity hammers home the multicultural legitimacy of Canadian national identity and gestures to the cultural roots of the nation. Yet this is not the nation that is actually being celebrated. As the

¹¹ Shane Koyczan, “For the 10 year anniversary of the Vancouver Winter Olympics I was approached by a few media outlets. CBC, CTV, and so on. I was asked if I would join,” Facebook, February 12, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/ShaneKoyczanPoetry/posts/2875240202558427?ref=embed_post.

¹² Koyczan, “For the 10 year anniversary.”

ceremonies progress, viewers come to see that modern, athletic Canada is profoundly white.”¹³

Based on my analyses, and as Kalman-Lamb summarizes here, the terms which govern and which are rehearsed within this Olympic spectacle are profoundly settler colonial.

Inversion of Terms

In Chapter Two, I hinted at an example of a spectacle which I argued could be indicative of changes to terms that are employed beyond just changes to content. There, I quoted Robinson who suggested that performances which are truly reconciliatory and not just inclusionary must be staged and managed in ways that move them beyond settler terms of engagement.¹⁴ In watching part of the Opening Ceremony for the 2015 Pan American Games hosted in Toronto, I argue that we may see such a change in terms taking place. Unlike the whiteness (assimilation), erasure, and extraction that I demonstrated was consistently evident in the case studies from the cultural portion of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, several examples from the 2015 PanAm Opening Ceremony may indicate a renegotiation of terms that delinks the spectacle from settler colonialism. I will discuss a few example points here, but leave a thorough analysis of this event for a future investigation. The portion I discuss here is a segment called “PowWow Carnival” (7:50–11:37 and 17:51–20:38).¹⁵

I suggest that there are several ways in which this portion of the Opening Ceremony of the 2015 PanAm Games rejects colonialism and demonstrates a re-negotiation of the terms of engagement. Firstly, in the overall framing of this scene, secondly in the vibrancy of the

¹³ Nathan Kalman-Lamb, “‘A Portrait of This Country’: Whiteness, Indigeneity, Multiculturalism and the Vancouver Opening Ceremonies,” *Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 27 (2012), “Portrait of this Country,” 17.

¹⁴ Dylan Robinson, “Listening to the Politics of Aesthetics: Contemporary Encounters between First Nations/Inuit and Early Music Traditions,” in *Aboriginal Music in Contemporary Canada: Echoes and Exchanges*, ed. Beverley Diamond and Anna Hoefnagels (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2012), 246.

¹⁵ “2015 Toronto Pan American Games Opening Ceremony,” March 13, 2020, videoclip, accessed August 6, 2024, YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPqo7h_G4dw. The carnival is “interrupted” by a video presenting the journey of the flame, and by the arrival of the flame to the stadium.

costumes, and thirdly in the music that is centered in this excerpt. I address each of these instances briefly here.

Rather than being a promotion of nationalism which served settler colonial goals, this event is instead framed as a powwow. It is entitled “PowWow Carnival” and features more than 180 dancers from 21 different dance troupes.¹⁶ The troupes all gather on stage dancing around world champion hoop dancer Nakotah LaRance. There are too many to name or even identify, but some examples include belly dancers (10:28–10:31), Morris dancers (11:09–11:12), and Flamenco dancers (11:04–11:08). Whereas in the third scene of Vancouver’s cultural portion multiculturalism was represented only through fiddle music, and then framed in such a way that pointed to a hierarchy of cultures, in the 2015 PanAm games, a much wider array of diverse cultures are represented, and they all remain equal. The choreography does not promote a gradual periphery of cultures against a hierarchy, but rather a celebration that centered around LaRance. One commentator described this scene as “a hip-hop party at the United Nations.”¹⁷

Secondly, in stark contrast to the whiteness of the costumes featured in the first scene of the Vancouver 2010 Opening Ceremony, the costumes at the 2015 PanAm Games in Toronto are vibrant. From bright orange, to fluorescent pinks and greens and more, this scene is much more demonstrative of the “rainbow of diversity” that the Vancouver ceremony had mentioned, but then erased.

In keeping with the framing of this event as a powwow, the music that is used for this portion of the ceremony is Indigenous song and drumming, mixed live by DJ Shub (former

¹⁶ Richasi, “Backstage Pass to Pan Am Games Make-up” Fascination – The Unofficial Cirque du Soleil Newsletter, July 23, 2015, <https://www.cirquefascination.com/?p=6291>.

¹⁷ Vinay Menon, “Pan Am Games opening ceremony an extravaganza,” *The Toronto Star*, July 10, 2015, accessed June 6, 2024, https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/pan-am-games-opening-ceremony-an-extravaganza/article_d607ce5e-55ac-5636-9988-d0e9dc3fa7ce.html.

member of A Tribe Called Red).¹⁸ Unlike the brief hint of Indigenous vocables that were spectralized during the first scene of the Van10 cultural portion (discussed in Chapter Three) in this portion of the PanAm opening, Indigenous song and drumming formed the backdrop of this celebration. Rather than orchestral underscores, DJ Shub's piece "PowWow Carnival" featuring the Little Creek Singers returns again at 2:39:13 after the lighting of the official cauldron and for the celebratory fireworks (until 2:41:50), again accompanying hoop dancer Nakotah LaRance.

It could be argued that much like the official First Nations Welcome portion of the ceremony at Vancouver 2010, this representation of diversity was merely a surface level inclusion, and that the artistic portion of the ceremony that comes later (1:16:45–1:59:35 and 2:22:46–2:29:29) does not feature the same representation as this brief portion did. However, the artistic portion at the Toronto PanAm games does not appear to be about promoting and celebrating Canada, but is more about sport, creativity, and acrobatics (it was designed by Cirque du Soleil). There is less room here then, for the settler colonial narratives of erasure and extraction discussed in my analyses of the Van10 cultural portion, although a much more in-depth analysis would be required to say so conclusively.

As a whole, I argue that this event may be indicative of the type of artistic performance that is reflective of a renegotiation of terms and of what Robinson suggests we look for in pursuit of engagement beyond mere inclusionary music. Unlike what was seen at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics as I have discussed in the main body of this dissertation, this spectacle does not present multiculturalism as a resource to be mined, nor does it feature Indigenous performance within a settler-colonial frame of reference merely for the sake of placating settler guilt. Rather, I suggest that what is seen here is a re-negotiation of the terms of engagement, perhaps even an

¹⁸ Richasi, "Backstage Pass."

inversion of those terms. The ceremony is bookended by Indigenous music, arranged and performed by Indigenous artists. The parameters of the event are not presented as being operated on settler terms, but rather, through an Indigenous framework for gathering and celebration (powwow)—although, depending on who was involved in organizing this, such a framing may also be considered appropriation, but that is not for me to state here. As a settler scholar, I cannot say conclusively whether this ceremony truly enacts Indigenous sovereignty and resurgence, however, its content does provide a stark contrast against which the settler colonial foundations of the Van10 ceremony become even more obvious.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the integrated analytic framework and model analyses I have presented in this dissertation go some of the way in responding to Dylan Robinson’s suggestion that attention must be given to “how extramusical choices – how musicians are positioned on stage, how musicians are attired, or how the performance is contextualized by program notes or in pre-concert talk articulate cultural and political meaning,” I acknowledge that there are also significant limitations to this type of work.¹⁹ Any analytic framework can only go so far in illuminating injustices, and no framework can conclusively state whether the communities and individuals that these artistic productions seek to honor are in fact honored, or whether the reconciliation they purport to enact moves beyond the stage. As Jody Wilson-Raybould has described, reconciliation must have real “on-the-ground” impacts for Indigenous peoples.²⁰ Next steps in these works of redress and reconciliation will do well to move from a starting point of

¹⁹ Robinson, “Politics of Aesthetics,” 235.

²⁰ Jody Wilson-Raybould, “Reconciling History,” interview by Ottawa International Writer’s Festival, November 8, 2024, Southminster United Church.

being in relationship with Indigenous hosts and listening well as a first priority, moving our efforts of reconciliation from printed page to practical pursuits.

As so much of the research presented and referenced here affirms, the processes of anti-colonialism and reconciliation will require extensive further work both inside and outside of academia. It will continue to involve co-intentional work between Indigenous peoples and settlers, and indeed, collaborative work, perhaps work which at times reflects the “agonistic dialogue” which Robinson expresses.²¹ At times, it will also involve work that is separate, as Métis artist David Garneau explains, “while decolonization and Indigenization is collective work, it sometimes requires occasions of separation—moments where Indigenous people take space and time to work things out among themselves, and parallel moments when allies ought to do the same.”²² Part of the settler work, Indigenous author Rachel Flowers suggests, is “to imagine alternative ways to be in relation with Indigenous peoples.”²³ In Chapter Two of this dissertation, I discussed alternative ways of being in relation through embracing the guest positionality as opposed to the settler positionality. I also offered an additional pathway through which alternative ways of being in relation might be embodied—that is, through seeking to operate from a position of self-giving love. This is merely one step and one suggestion in the continuing healing process that reconciliation will require.

At the end of the working definition of anti-colonialism that I provided in the Introductory chapter of this dissertation, I included the concept of working towards “shared values,” (which came from Harsha Walia and Philip Blake) and similarly, in Chapter Two,

²¹ Robinson, “Politics of Aesthetics,” 224.

²² David Garneau, “Imaginary Spaces of Conciliation and Reconciliation: Art, Curation, and Healing,” in *Arts of Engagement*, ed. Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin (Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2016), 21–41, <https://doi.org/10.51644/9781771121705-003>, 23.

²³ Rachel Flowers, “Refusal to Forgive: Indigenous Women’s Love and Rage,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 4, no. 2 (2015), <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22829>, 34.

pointed towards a “decolonized future” through the final row of the analytic chart. In her article, Flowers goes on to explain that “what affords settlers privilege is the ability to implicitly set the terms of what a shared future is, without realizing they are asymmetrically dictating the terms of this discussion.”²⁴ Her language thoroughly reflects the decolonial position articulated by Mignolo, which I have also attempted to model in this dissertation. Future studies should explore more extensively what these “shared values” might be, through a process of dialogue and collaboration between Indigenous leaders and settler allies. A potential initial starting point for such a dialogue could be the Seven Grandfather Teachings.²⁵ These Seven Teachings are common in many Indigenous cultures across Turtle Island: wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, and truth.²⁶ In the Ojibway tradition, these Seven Teachings were given by the Seven Grandfathers to help people re-learn how to live in harmony with one another and with Creation.²⁷ As settlers continue to relinquish our colonizer positionality, live as guests, and embrace love, we might seek out further opportunities to learn from our Indigenous hosts about these Seven Teachings, and walk in them together.

Concluding Remarks

With this dissertation I have aimed to demonstrate that settler colonialism is frequently evident in expressions of Canadian nationalism at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games through techniques of erasure and extraction, emphasized in stories and representations of landscape and multiculturalism. I have also affirmed that although spectacles tend to blind audiences to

²⁴ Flowers, “Refusal to Forgive,” 35.

²⁵ I am deeply indebted to Dr Robert-Falcon Oulette for this suggestion.

²⁶ Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*, First University of Minnesota Press edition. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 64. Howard Munroe and Desiree Hernandez Ibinarriaga, “Indigenising Design: The Seven Grandfathers’ Teachings as a Design Methodology,” *The Design Journal* 25, no. 3 (2022): 437–58, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2022.2058680>, 439.

²⁷ Benton-Benai, *The Mishomis Book*, 60.

injustice, and play a significant role in rehearsing particular stories as authoritative, multimodal discourse analysis enables the scholar to look at and critique oppressive underlying logics. Further, this kind of analysis aids in demonstrating how surface representation can be curated in opposition to structural reality and affirms Mignolo's assertions that decolonization takes place only when we address both content and terms together. These arguments and analyses are motivated by the anti-colonial framework, which has Indigenous liberation as its end, and requires the relinquishing of settler colonial positionalities for host, guest, and neighbor interactions.

At the beginning of this chapter, I included two quotations which reflect some of the overarching concerns that I have addressed in this dissertation. In speaking of some of the beliefs that she was raised with and their counter-cultural nature, American singer-songwriter Joan Baez states, "We're talking about how human beings are more important than nationalism, more important than a flag."²⁸ This position is one which sees people as more important than love of nation or flag. As I demonstrate in this dissertation, and as is evident in news headlines daily, in both displays of nationalism and international relations, people are marginalized and endangered because of overzealous love of nation and flag.

Similarly, Jairo I Fúnez-Flores's brief aphorism beautifully summarizes what I have attempted to articulate in the second chapter of this dissertation, and throughout. In alignment with many of the writers and scholars I have drawn from in this dissertation, Fúnez-Flores succinctly states: "You can't diversity, equity & inclusion your way out of coloniality and settler

²⁸ Joan Baez, "Joan Baez Is Still Doing Beautiful, Cool Stuff," interview by Amanda Petrusich, *The New Yorker*, May 14, 2023, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-interview/joan-baez-is-still-doing-beautiful-cool-stuff>

colonialism.”²⁹ As the anti-colonial critiques discussed throughout this dissertation illuminate, multiculturalism and recognition (otherwise operated through diversity and inclusion) are usually manifestations of the settler colonial status quo and continue to contribute to the erasure and extraction of Indigenous peoples, identities, and cultures. To move beyond settler colonialism, as those critiques showed, and as Fúnez-Flores’s statement articulates, requires something more than just changes to content. As discussed in Chapter Two, this can involve Indigenous refusals and resurgence. For settlers, however, opposition to settler-colonial terms can come through seeking to operate as a guest and doing so from a position of self-giving love. White settler-colonial nationalism cannot be defeated by EDI practices alone, but with a position such as the one that Baez speaks of—when loving people takes precedence over loving nation and flag.

²⁹ Jairo I Fúnez-Flores (@Jairo_I_Funez), “You can’t diversity, equity & inclusion your way out of coloniality and settler colonialism,” X post (formerly Twitter), July 11, 2022, 9:59a.m., https://twitter.com/Jairo_I_Funez/status/1546494513056718848

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Appendix 1

Artistic Directors: David Atkins and Ignatius Jones

Associate Artistic Director and Director of Protocol: Steve Boyd

Associate Artistic Director: Drew Anthony

Director of Design: Douglas Paraschuk

Director of Music: Dave Pierce

Associate Director of Music: Donovan Seidle.

Director of Choreography: Jean Grand-Maître, Associate Director of Choreography: Marlise McCormick.

Senior Designer and Indigenous Consultant: John Powell

Four Host First Nations CEO: Tewanee Joseph

Leaders of each of the Four Nations: Chief Leonard Andrew (Lil'wat), Chief Ernest Campbell (Musqueam), Chief Bill Williams (Squamish), Chief Justin George (Tseil-Waututh)